

# BENEATH THE SURFACE



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# **BENEATH THE SURFACE**





# BENEATH THE SURFACE

## AND OTHER STORIES

BY

GERALD WARRE CORNISH

WITH A PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR  
AND AN INTRODUCTION BY  
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## INTRODUCTION

THE writer of these stories was not an author by profession, but the reader will quickly see that they are the work of a singularly sincere and vivid imagination. They were written at long intervals. The earliest, "A Portrait of a Gentleman" was written some time before he published his first story, "The Stowaway," which appeared in the *Independent Review*, 1904; the latest, "Beneath the Surface," was written in spare hours while he was in training in this country with his regiment, the 6th Batt. Somerset Light Infantry, and finished when they were actually serving in France. He was killed on September 16, 1916, the second day of the main advance on the Somme, while leading his company in an attack upon the German trenches in front of the village of Gueudecourt, south of Flers.

He wished his stories to be published, but



without any memoir or account of himself ; so I shall write of him, not as a friend, but as a critic. Perhaps the reader, when he has read a few of these stories, may become aware of a congruity between this injunction of the author's regarding himself, and his manner of writing.

Imagination was to him an impersonal means of getting at the truth. He trusted it in himself and admired it in others as a faculty as impersonal as reason, which supplemented knowledge, and without which no amount of information could save the scholar from blundering about the classics, the historian from going wrong about human nature, and the man of science about the world.

His writing is that of a man who trusts to an unusual degree his own intuitions ; and this good faith in his own statements is communicated, giving solidity to everything he describes ; even when the experiences and incidents are unusual, mystical, or far away either in time or space. The actuality of the scenes in "Anabasis," an expansion of a few pages of Xenophon, is astonishing.

We see and believe, and at the same time enjoy the vigorous ease of his good English.

Some of these stories may strike the reader as showing the influence of Tolstoi. The resemblance is not due to a conscious adoption of Tolstoi's literary methods. It springs rather from the author's faith in what his imagination presents to him, a quality which Tolstoi possessed in an unrivalled degree. Nearly all these stories are creations of a mind in search of what is trustworthy in human nature and ultimately desirable. His divining-rod is sincerity. Like Tolstoi he finds the waters of life in unexpected places and people. He sees that sincerity, without which religion cannot be understood or life properly lived, in the dry, passionately negative spirit of the little bookbinder, rather than in the romantic, hospitable mind of the philosopher, whose sentiments and theories are admirably large, tolerant, and serene ("The Poet and the Atheist"). He divines it immediately in the personality of the explorer Fin Lund ("Beneath the Surface"), whose self-assertive and visionary talk stamps him in the eyes of averagely



honest experts as an advertising charlatan. The goodness he trusts is a very simple thing ("Eliza Jennings"); and he is inclined to see it more readily in the poor than in the rich and educated. Not because wealth and cultivation are undesirable in themselves. but because they often tend to bewilder the mind, and to complicate the only human relations which he really admires: those which are simple, selfless, and direct.

The motive of his work is always truth; the result is a kind of beauty, sober and satisfying. It is a beauty hidden in the subject itself, to be discovered by attacking the subject as directly as possible. That is the secret of his method. It lends his style and treatment of character a certain austerity. Genuine austerity often uses the plain, well-worn phrase or word and not the most compendious, hard-hitting one. This quality in his work is utterly different from that affectation, as of an iron pity, by which skilful writers, who fear to be emotional, strive nevertheless to move us. The sobriety of a story like "Eliza Jennings" is a more delicate thing than that. It springs from

feeling that if life is allowed to speak for itself, human goodness will be apparent, without the aid of poetic exaggerations or even the sophistications of literary reserve.

In these stories there is a great relish for life taken unquestioned at its face value. It is at this point I feel most tempted to infringe the injunction under which I write and draw upon my private knowledge of the author; to recall him, to expatiate on the theme that the qualities which made him a good writer, made him also a rare companion and a good soldier. It is a great thing in friendship to be able to enjoy, and never a greater than when beset by boredom, discomfort, and death. But the reader will discern this power for himself on many pages; in the description of hunting, of the Norwegian harbour in "The Stowaway," of Xenophon's ten thousand crossing the Euphrates, of the desolate, marshy regions into which the narrator is taken, swept along by the prophetic impetus of the explorer Fin Lund; even in the description of a horse pulling a cart-load of hay up an English lane. He may even feel surprise that such a relish



for the actual and its sufficiency, as the little sketch of Horace at his Sabine farm exhibits, should have been neighbour in the author's mind to so restless a discontent with it; a surprise tempered, however, by the recollection that all tolerable mystics have been remarkable for their firm grasp of the actual, and sometimes for shrewd common sense; so that one is often tempted to say, it is the best pagans who make the most thorough-going mystics. It is of the mystical vein in some of these stories I would say a word in conclusion.

One of his favourite themes is the adventure of some character who either by accident or effort breaks through the firm crust of ordinary experience, when the nature of life is revealed to him in another and very different light.

In the first story he wrote, "A Portrait of a Gentleman," the occasion is a fall in the hunting-field; the result is that life, which the moment before had presented itself in the form most attractive and exciting to a sportsman, is suddenly felt by him as a sickening, chaotic nightmare. The occasion

is physical, the revelation does not go further than a suggestion that the common-sense world with its pleasures, fairly satisfactory to a selfish fortunate man, may suddenly give way and let him through into a terrifying one. The next story in date, "The Stow-away," is a criticism of the ugly, inhuman muddle of the social order of a country that prides itself first on being "a great Empire," compared with the sanity and decency of conditions in one which is frankly "a power of the second order." But in it, too, occurs a delirium which is significant in the history of the hero. The stowaway had always had an odd, feckless faith in Destiny; but while he is shut in his little tomb of packing-cases in the hold of the Norwegian ship, tormented in the dark by thirst and terror, his confidence gives way.

"It seemed to him that he awoke from a state of unconsciousness. The waters were still talking round the ship's sides, in the same loud and senseless manner. He found his mind strangely clear, and saw things in the light of reason. He had been a fool and a madman. It was all a lie, that nonsense

about Destiny—all day-dreams. This was the real truth ; this was his awakening to the facts of life. He had always refused to face the truth, liked to live in a little world of his own imagination, and this was the end of it . . . this was the real truth . . . darkness and suffering, awful suffering. . . . ‘ People would never believe what suffering is,’ he thought, ‘ they would never believe it, not if you was to tell them till you was black in the face, they could not believe it . . . it’s worse than what anybody understands. . . . And this is truth, this is God’s blessed truth. I believed a fairy-tale, and I’ve got what I deserve.’ He began to shout and scream once more ; and then he fell by degrees into a state of coma.”

The story ends as it begins with a few sentences describing the reasonable human happiness he attained in Norway : “ The mountain rose above his house, grey, vast, and barren in the gathering gloom. But it brought no chill or vague foreboding to his breast. For, in spite of his settled life and prosperity, he still loved Destiny.” It does not do to press too hard for definite meanings ;



but it is clear that the underlying suggestion is that though darkness and suffering lie close beneath rational happiness, there is something friendly in the unknown powers, at any rate towards one who acts on that supposition, however blindly and fecklessly. But in "The Poet and the Atheist," which was written a few years later, there is more than this conception of a friendly Destiny, which may lead the individual to a happy and reasonable existence. Such ends as that ideal implies are here no longer regarded as ultimate; the words of the dying man deny the value of the poet's rich, well-balanced existence: "It is all upside down." And at last in "Beneath the Surface" this mystical strain finds direct expression in what is at once a traveller's tale and an allegory of the author's sense of the true nature of the world: a belief in the limitless power of mind over matter.

The transitions in this story from the normal to the transcendental are skilfully managed. From the first, premonitions and strange emotions, destined to prove more and more significant, rise lightly and natur-

ally to the surface of events. The characters who appear by the way are well indicated, and also their influence on the alternating doubt and certainty of the narrator that he is the companion of the greatest explorer the world has known, whose quest is the most vital one that man can undertake. Admirable, too, are the descriptions of river and marsh and forest seen in the light of his strange, increasing excitement. To some readers this story will seem the best ; others will think "Anabasis" the author's best work ; the critic will see in both, though the inspiration is different, the same integrity of imagination.

DESMOND MACCARTHY

*October 1917*

## ELIZA JENNINGS

It was seven o'clock in the morning, and an old woman lay awake in the upper room of a two-roomed cottage in Darfield village. Her granddaughter lay beside her asleep. The old woman had her legs paralysed, and suffered from asthma. Her sons and daughters were married, and had left her, but they sent her money to keep her. When the last one married, her eldest son's daughter, Eliza Jennings, came to look after her from her father's farm about ten miles off. Her own brother had lately married, and lived with his wife and parents at the farm, he and his father working the seventy acres of land between them ; so Eliza could be spared. The old woman lay on her back, thinking of these mercies. In spite of her age her features were round, and her hair and eyebrows nearly black ; and there was still some colour, though of an unhealthy



tinge, on her face and lips. The room was cold and the air stuffy. The ceiling, crossed by beams, was whitewashed, and the lower part of the walls was papered with a grey pattern. The counterpane on the bed was of a faded blue check. A white blind, marked with iron-mould stains, was pulled down over the window, and curtains were nailed up on either side of it, consisting of two lengths of fancy muslin and two of red flannel. Presently Eliza got up and dressed herself, and went down to the kitchen. The staircase came up into the bedroom from below, and there was a little railing at the top instead of a bedroom door. The steps were so narrow that they only accommodated Eliza's heels, and half her soles, as she went down. The kitchen had a stone floor; it was papered like a parlour with a dingy pattern; there was one small window and a crack of light under the door. Eliza raked out the fire and made it up, and set the kettle on to boil. She rubbed up the handles and hinges of the oven, blacked the grate, and dusted down the chairs and mantelpiece and ornaments. Then she rubbed her hands in a pail with

some water in it, which stood by the hearth ; cut bread and butter, and made tea, and took the breakfast up to her grandmother. After she had got her own she took the pail in her hand, unbolted the kitchen door, and went out into the sunshine.

Eliza was a well-set-up young woman of twenty-five, with a pale face and freckles, and brown eyes. In the afternoons she was neat and clean and had a fringe. All the time she had been with her grandmother she had scarcely left the cottage except to go to see her parents, or to go to church on a Sunday evening. But there was a young girl, still at school, whom she had in on Saturdays to help her clean the house, and she had all the news from her ; they were fast friends ; and thus she knew all about the neighbours.

Outside the sun was warm. It was the middle of summer. A cart with a load of hay was coming up the lane, which rose steeply and was full of ruts. The big horse worked vehemently and the cart rattled. The sun flashed on the brass of his harness as he struck his hoofs into the surface of the road, shoulders and quarters straining. A

young man, on the other side of him, with a face glowing red under his hat, shouted at him. They came along and reached the top, just opposite the cottage.

“’Mornin’, ’Liza,” said the young man, looking over the back of the horse. He came slowly round from the other side. He had no whip, and his hands were stuck into his breeches pockets, under the leather strap which belted his corduroys.

“Good weather for th’ hay,” said Eliza, looking down the lane. This was her brother-in-law’s cousin, who worked for his father in the neighbourhood.

She had met her cousin by marriage in the lane like this many a time, and they had passed the time of day. She knew all about him; he was a bachelor and a good son to his parents, but lively, and did not keep the best company in the village.

This morning John Hebborn seemed inclined to be more friendly than usual. He leant one arm on the shaft, meaning that he intended to give his horse a rest, and alluded to the stones in the lane and the weight of the load. His hat was turned up behind, and



he pulled it down over his eyes, keeping the sun off. She noted that his moustache was the same colour as the horse.

Eliza felt shy, as she wanted to get through the gate, to go down for the water which drained from the hill above, and ran out of a pipe in the hedge bank farther down the lane; also there was a smudge of black on her arm, which she did not like to be seen. John Hebborn looked as if he did not mean to move at once.

"How's granny?" he said in a jocular tone.

"She gets the bronchitis so bad, these cold nights," said Eliza. She came up to the gate and unlatched it, and passed through, brushing past the hollies with her pail so as not to touch him.

"Come up, Smiler," said John, and the horse threw his weight forward with a jerk, the cart rattling again and the load of hay quivering. He walked along at Eliza's side, and she was still compelled to keep to the grass at the edge of the road.

"Your arm's black, 'Liza," he said, taking her wrist in his hand.

"Now then, young man," she said in a loud

and lively tone, and snatching it away, "you let my arm alone, and keep off now, or I'll tell your mother," she added. He screwed up his eyes and scratched the bristles on his cheek, laughing.

"You needna be afraid of me, 'Liza, I wouldn't harm you—no, I wouldn't; never at all, and donna you think it," he added.

The lane passed into the open common. She wanted to get across to the water which was on the other side of the road.

"Well, good day, John," she said, smiling and standing back into the hedge to let him go by.

"Good day, 'Liza," and he passed on with his cart into the open. Eliza filled her pail at the water-tap, and went back to the cottage. She never looked behind till she got to the gate, when she took a glimpse at John Hebborn's figure as he crossed the green at his horse's side. There was no sentiment in her mind as she looked at him, but more interest than before. His hands were still in his pockets, and she saw his back, blue shirt-sleeves, and waistcoat with a strip of brown let in up the middle of it.

She went into the kitchen, filled a jug from the pail, and took the water up to the bedroom. Her grandmother was still lying on her back, and the room had not yet got warmed. Eliza drew up the blind, and let in a square of sunlight.

“ Well, I never,” said the old lady, “ there’s all the colours of the rainbow on the ceiling—see ye there !—eh, that is pretty, to be sure ! ” There was a patch of coloured light on the ceiling, which came from a slab of cut glass over a photograph which stood on the table opposite the window. The photograph was one of Eliza, taken before she left home, and presented to her by her father with the glass mount over it. It had been placed there the day before, and the edge of the glass was burning in the sun. The phenomenon having been traced to its cause, Eliza proceeded to attend to her grandmother. She took the aged counterpane off the bed, and put it over a small arm-chair at the bedside ; took her grandmother round the body in her arms, and lowered her carefully into the chair, and wrapped her up in the counterpane, and made the bed. Then she poured water into

the basin, and washed the old woman's face and hands. After that she undid her hair, and brushed it out and combed it, and rolled it up again, and put on her cap. Then she got her back into bed again, and put the clothes and counterpane on, turned back the sheet under her chin, and made all tidy and smooth. The old woman was looking at the ceiling again.

"There, now, if that isna the prettiest thing I've seen for mony a day; all the colours of the rainbow, 'Liza, every one of 'em." Eliza flashed the colours backwards and forwards to please her, and then went down to the kitchen, and went on with her work. In the afternoon she washed and dressed herself, putting on a dark skirt and a grey bodice trimmed with black, and a white apron, and sat sewing in her grandmother's room. After tea her grandmother fell asleep, and she went down to the kitchen. At half-past seven she lit the lamp, and sat sewing by its light.

Presently she heard some one come through the gate of the garden, and there was a knock at her door. She laid down her work on the table, and went to the door.



“Eh dear! it's you, is it?” said Eliza as she opened the door. John Hebburn stood outside in his Sunday clothes.

“Good evening, 'Liza,” he said in his slightly jocular tone.

“Well, come in, John,” she said after a pause, “don't keep standing out there.” He followed her into the room. “Sit ye down on the sofy, and make yourself at home.” She sat down by the lamp, took up her sewing, and sewed away without looking at him. John seated himself on the sofa, and leaned forward with his elbows on his knees, and a new bowler hat, with a scarlet lining, in his hands.

“It's beautiful weather, 'Liza,” he said as he looked at the fire. “No need for a fire. It's been a heavy crop.” Eliza assented, and gave him no assistance. He continued laboriously about the crop of hay. Eliza nodded, and snipped a bit of thread off with a pair of scissors. He looked into the bottom of his hat, and read the name of the maker over to himself.

“It's been a powerful heavy crop,” he repeated. Still Eliza would not unbend or

take her eyes off her sewing, and John ploughed on heavily. He sat quite still in the same position, now and then jerking the brim of his hat, and frowning at the coals in the fire. His face glowed a deep red in the light of the lamp. At last Eliza looked at him, and he looked so clean and respectable with his white collar and black coat, and his short cut hair, and striped tie, the sun and labour of the week appearing only in his face and hands, that her frame of mind underwent a change. She laid her sewing down, and put the kettle on, and got out the tea-things, and made some tea. John sat back in his chair, and put his hat on the floor.

“Thee’d better hang it up, John,” she said. The conversation began to flow more easily. John had seen Eliza in church the Sunday before ; Eliza knew all about everybody who went to church from her young friend, and the talk became gossip and found its own legs. John produced a packet of cigarettes, which he bought at the post office for five a penny, and asked leave to smoke, which Eliza granted with a glad heart. They sat for some time and talked. As Eliza saw him

sitting in his chair, and his handsome brow and moustache, the thought of her own father came into her head, and of what her grandmother had told her about her grandfather; and they seemed to be in the room again somewhere—a pair of them, one smoking and the other sewing. John produced some nuts from his pocket, and gave her some, and she began to crack them with her teeth, throwing the shells into the fire. At last he said good night, and left the cottage.

“I’ll look in again, Eliza, some night, thee may be sure of that,” he said.

“You can come if you liken,” she said, and shut the door and bolted it.

She sat down again by the lamp to sew. Presently she heard her grandmother upstairs coughing. She lit a candle and went up. The old woman had raised herself on one elbow, and was breathing heavily.

“O Lord, O Lord! child, my breath comes so hard; I canna hear myself speak.” There was a crumbling and whistling sound in her chest and throat as she breathed. Eliza went down and made a poultice, and put it on her chest. Then she waited a while, until the

old woman felt easier, and at last she dropped off to sleep.

After this John often came to see her, and one night, about a month later, he asked her to marry him. He spoke in businesslike and measured tones as he looked at the fire.

"There's room for you, 'Liza, at the farm. You're wanted there, and it's not only me as wants you; my mother's none so young as she was, and she could do with a good girl like you for to help her." Eliza was silent for some time.

"But I'm wanted here, John," she said at last, in a cross tone. John settled his elbows more firmly on his knees.

"But you're never going to say no for that reason, 'Liza. You've not taken your granny for better for worse. It says in the Book, 'for this cause she *shall* forsake her father and mother, and cleave to her 'usband, and they twain shall be one flesh.' "

"Well, I don't know how granny'd get on wi'out me," she persisted, in a complaining tone of voice.

"Why, bless me, 'Liza," said John, "she can go and live with your fayther and mother,



or with your uncle ; or you can get a lass in here to look after her ; or your uncle could send his daughter Jane ; she's not married, nor likely to be yet a while." Eliza went on sewing.

" Ay, but there's nobody would do so well as me," she complained, with sulky tears in her voice. John saw that he must change his tack. Reason was no use.

" Dear 'Liza," he said, " donna be hard now, donna be hard ; think of me, 'Liza, and say yes ; I want you more than any one else does." Eliza was still silent. " I'll wait a while if you like," he added.

" How long will you wait then ? " said Eliza.

" As long as ever you like," he said.

" Till granny dies ? " said Eliza. John was silent.

" 'Liza, you're a torment, that's what you are." He got up and took her by the hands as she held her sewing. " You're a little torment," he said, drawing her towards him. " And if you torment me so, I shan't love you, 'Liza," and he laid his head against hers, while she put an arm round his neck.

"I shan't know how to tell granny," she said in his ear as they fondled one another. "It's cruel of me to think of leaving her, that it is."

"It's all for the best, darling 'Liza," said John, in a fever of tenderness, but Eliza would allow no further advances.

"Well, then, we mun do as Patience says."

"What does Patience say?"

"Wait a while, John," she said, smiling. "I must see what's to be done with granny. It may be a bit yet before we get her settled. You're not afraid of waiting?"

"I'll wait all my life, if need be," said John; and soon afterwards, with more kissing, they parted.

"Now, then," said Eliza to herself, with a gulp, as she lit a candle and went upstairs, "however am I going to tell granny?" But her grandmother was asleep, so the difficulty was postponed. But Eliza's grandmother knew that John Hebborn was courting her granddaughter, so she was quite prepared for the news next day.

"Well, 'Liza," she said, "you won't want to be leaving your old granny in a hurry;

there's no harm in waiting a while ; we must see what your father can do for to settle it up." So Eliza wrote a letter to her father, telling him she wanted to get married. About a week later she got an answer from him.

"DEAR ELIZA,—We was all glad to hear you had got a young man, and wanted to get married, it being your own brother-in-law's cousin, and I never heard a word against him, though it makes things awkward, being as granny can't live here has you know because, with your brother's wife and the children, their is no room for her. I shall see your uncle next Monday at Darwell market, and we will talk it over. You might wait a bit, if agreeable. She's an old woman, eighty-nine next January.—Your aff. father,

"THOMAS JENNINGS."

Eliza sighed after she had read this, and when she showed it to John, he shook his head. He suggested many different plans. At last, after six weeks, came her uncle, to say that Jane could not be spared from

home ; that her cousin John was courting, and would soon be married, and then Jane should go to look after her granny. " So you'll be like to wait a bit longer, 'Liza. If granny isna took, as is like enough, Jack'll be married afore long, and then you'll be free."

So Eliza waited, and John waited too, coming in of an evening, and walking with her on Sundays. They waited a twelve-month, and her cousin Jack was still single, and Jane could not be spared.

The seasons went by, bringing their lapfuls of produce. Eliza was fond of the village church, and in her barren life, spent in the service of the bedroom, the kitchen, and the garden, such events as the dressing of the church with flowers at Easter and harvest-time were events to divide the monotony of her days. A sober contentment had come into her life, and expressed itself in her looks and movements. It was not happiness, but it pointed to some measure of happiness and the completion of life, shared with husband and children to be.

One day her father drove up to the garden

gate in a light cart, with two calves behind the seat tied up in sacks and labelled for the rail. He was a small man with a brown beard. He looked not more than forty, though he was a grandfather already. He got down from the cart, and hitched the pony's reins over the gate, as Eliza went out and greeted him.

"Well, 'Liza," said her father as they went into the cottage, "you're thinking it's time you was married, I doubt; very well, you listen to me. Me and your uncle's going to settle it up for you. Your cousin Jack's to be married next month, and it'll suit your uncle to send Jane over now, as soon as Jack brings his wife home. Now that's all right, isn't it?" he said, laughing heartily at her. Eliza said "Oh!" several times, and grew red, and laughed with him. Her father's cheerful voice rang in her ears, and his smiling face and brown beard confronted her with a happy reality. The good news was brighter than all her hopes. They went upstairs to the bedroom, and the little man kissed his old mother, and sat down by the bed, whilst Eliza stood at the foot of it. The



old lady lay on her back, listening to the plans for her welfare and Eliza's.

"Well, you must do as seems best, Thomas; what must be must; you've been a good son to me. I'm only a burden now, but God A'mighty still spares me. I pray he'll take me every day, but my time isna come yet. I shanna be afraid o' death when he comes; he's no King of Terrors for me. You've been a good girl to me, 'Liza," she went on, "but it isna right for th' young folks to be looking after th' old 'uns, when they might be bringing up children of their own."

Mrs. Jennings had a text which she recited on every occasion; it was one of her pleasures. She produced it now.

"The Lord's been very good to me, Thomas. I remember the last tex' I ever hear in church, it was when the Bishop come down." This was the unvarying preface, and her son and Eliza waited respectfully for what was to come. Long practice had lent a measured and rhythmical tone to the recital.

"Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise His holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not

all His benefits; who forgiveth all thy sin, and healeth all thine infirmities; who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness.' That's the longest tex' I ever heard a minister preach from," she added, this being her regular way of winding it up.

After this Eliza fetched up some tea for her father, who had to go on to the station to leave the calves and to pay for some sheep, and could not stay long. He ran through all the family in answer to the old lady's questions, with smiles and laughter at the doings of the children and their progress in the world. Eliza went out with him when he took his leave. He promised to see his brother soon, and make sure that he sent Jane over as he had said he would do, and so drove away.

Two months passed, and Eliza heard nothing more, though she wrote once to her father and once to her uncle. John became angry. At last Eliza had a letter from her uncle.

"DEAR ELIZA,—There's been a young man courting your cousin Jane, and now it's

settled up ; for my son Jack has brought his wife home, and Jane is going to marry Richard Barker, who lives up at Millfield, and is gardener to Mr. Haskell at the Vicarage. So it's awkward again about granny. Your father spoke of having a girl in to live with her ; but we could not afford the money, what with the rent of the house and the food and keep, which is all me and your father can spare as it is, in these times. You wait a while, Eliza ; you are a good girl, and your grandmother's an old woman, ninety next birthday, though she do keep her faculties ; but she's not for this world much longer.—Your uncle,

“ WILLM. JENNINGS.

“ If times get better with your father and me, we will see about having the girl in ; but we can't do it now, things is that bad with both of us.”

So Eliza waited another year, and John waited. But at this time his visits began to be less frequent. One time he did not come to see her for a whole month. Consequently, when he turned up at last one evening Eliza

was angry and did not answer his knock. He came in of his own accord after a while, and Eliza took no notice of him, but went on sewing as if she were alone. John took his usual seat by the fire. He too felt angry, and waited in silence. Eliza sighed to herself, but did not choose to speak.

"You're a silly girl, Eliza," said John, "you're sulky like a baby."

"And why should I be sulky, eh?" said Eliza, "there's nothing to put me out, is there? I can do without you, I dare say." John opened his eyes, and pulled at his moustache, sneering.

"You're a baby, Eliza," he said, "and you're afraid of leaving your granny, and you're afraid of speaking up to your father. What's the use of hanging on here, and time slipping by?" he said, raising his voice. "There's two years and more gone now. If you wanted it, you would just give warning and go. Say to your father, 'This day month I quit and marry John Hebborn, and granny can look after herself.' They'd have to let you go. But you won't do it, you haven't the pluck. Or you haven't the heart, as you

might say, and that's rubbish with a husband waiting for you." Eliza's breast began to heave.

"Ah, I knew how it 'ud be," she said, "and you promised to wait all your life. Fie on you, you're fickle and you're changeable, you didna mean it when you said it. But it's lucky we did wait too, John Hebborn, for you'd be tired of me by now, if we was man and wife." John got up with his hat in his hand.

"Now you're going it, Eliza, and the fault's all on your side. I tell you how it is," he said, "you might marry me next month, if you cared to do. Give your parents a month's notice, and I'll be ready for you." He went away, and Eliza let him go, without having the last word herself. She did not do as he advised. He came again after a few days, and they made it up, but he was no longer so ardent as at the first.

One day Eliza saw Miss Franks, the Colonel's daughter, who lived at Dale Court in the valley below, coming along the lane. This young lady had been to see Eliza and her grandmother not infrequently and had



brought grapes for the old woman from the hot-houses at the Court. She liked Eliza, and had had her story from her, and had offered to help her, if there was anything she could do. But Eliza had not been able to suggest anything. Miss Franks came along the lane now, with two spaniels running at her side. She stopped at the gate, and came in. Eliza gave her a chair, and stood by the table while she talked.

"Eliza," she said after some friendly words, "I've been thinking of a plan for you. I don't think it's right that you should wait so long to be married, just because there's nobody else to look after your grandmother. I don't know what you'll say to this plan, but I've been thinking—why shouldn't Mrs. Jennings go into a nice paying *home*, where she will be well looked after and taken care of?" Here Miss Franks began to get hurried, as the talking was all on her side, and Eliza was only waiting to hear more. "Of course, it's very difficult to get people into these homes, because there's so much demand for them nowadays. But look here," she went on, pulling some papers out of her

hand-bag, and holding them in an undecided way in her gloved hand, "I happen to know the Sister who is head of this place, such a nice place. I went over it once, and I thought everything looked *so* happy and nice. Of course, it's very superior, quite different from the ordinary thing, though I'm afraid its name is not very prepossessing," she said, with an attempt at a smile. She showed one of the papers, at the top of which was printed

STREATHAM HOME FOR INCURABLES

Patroness : The Duchess of Ledbury.

"That's it, you see. Of course, they don't as a rule admit very old people," she hurried on, "it's more for people suffering from ordinary incurable diseases ; but we've been very good subscribers, and I know one or two of the committee, and I wrote to Sister Cecilia, and she says they have a bed vacant just now, and they would be willing, as an exception, to take your grandmother. Of course, it's a paying home, the most respectable people go to it ; it's seven and sixpence a week ; and I'm sure your parents and your

uncle would be able to give that." Eliza sat down by the table, and Miss Franks handed her the papers; but Eliza held them in her hand without looking at them, in the same undecided way as Miss Franks had held them.

"Eh dear!" she said at last, shaking her head and smiling. "Eh, it's very kind of you, Miss Franks, indeed it is. But granny would never go. Oh, she'd never go! You wouldn't get her there, not if you was to drag her." Miss Franks looked disconcerted.

"But surely, Eliza," she said, "she could be got to listen to reason. It would be so much more comfortable for all concerned; and I'm perfectly certain she'd be happy there. All the Sisters are so sweet, and the people all looked so happy, I thought. There was an entertainment for them the afternoon I was there. She *really would* be happier there than here, even if there was no question of your wanting to be married." But Eliza only smiled and shook her head.

"Eh, she's a queer old body, is granny; old-fashioned, she is; you wouldn't get her

into one of them places. Poor old granny—to think of that now ! ”

“ Well, it’s very unfortunate,” said Miss Franks, speaking in a slightly masculine tone of voice. “ I must *say* I think it’s rather foolish. I wish you would let me speak to her about it. I know how she would feel—the loss of independence, she would think. But really I cannot see what discredit there would be, or anything in the *least* of that kind about going into a nice paying home. Why, anybody might do it ! I’m sure if I was in her position I should only be too glad not to be a burden on my relations ; but you people are so much prouder than we are.” Eliza smiled.

“ I’m sure it’s very kind of you, Miss Franks, indeed it is, to take so much trouble, and we’ve always been grateful to you, and granny’s said so to me many a time. But there now,” she went on, “ we couldn’t send granny away ; she’s never been used to strangers—and she’d never go neither.”

“ Well, I suppose you know best,” said Miss Franks after a pause. “ I must say I think it’s a great pity ; it’s too hard that you should

be left here, and your young man waiting for you." Eliza said nothing, but sighed once and again politely, and Miss Franks took her leave. She went down the lane with rather a flushed face, still holding the printed circular in her hand.

On the Saturday after this Eliza's young friend came in to help her clean up the house. She was more silent than usual as she scrubbed the stones and slopped the wet cloth about, with an apron of sacking pinned over her dress. She was proud of this job, since it was a task somewhat beyond her strength which she was never asked to do at home. After all the cleaning was done Eliza laid the table for tea. As Eliza was pouring out tea, the little maid suddenly pulled her sleeve.

"'Liza," she said in a hurried whisper, "I didn't think I ought to keep it from you; John Hebborn's been walking out with Lizzie Woodbridge, that girl I told you about, what come last year to th' Elms." Eliza stopped pouring out the tea.

"You're a silly little girl," she said in a passion; "you mind your own business, and



don't go poking your nose into other people's affairs, or you wonna come here again." She finished pouring out the tea in silence, and began to eat her bread and butter, seeing nothing. After a time she began to ask questions, and had the whole story and all the evidence given her.

It was some days later, and Eliza was outside the cottage in the evening, getting some potatoes, a task she had neglected in the morning. It was just light enough for her to see the bed and the dark plants. Some one came up the lane, and she recognized the step. He came up and stood by the gate, his black coat and bowler hat and the red of his face just visible in the dusk, and his collar showing white. He saw her figure in the garden.

"'Liza," he said in an undertone, "I've come to tell you straight I canna wait no longer. It's been too long a time." She moved and stooped down over the dark bed.

"You're free to go, John," she said, "and so I've told you often."

"I'm going to marry Lizzie Woodbridge,"

said John, still standing by the gate. Eliza bent over the soil and said nothing. She heard him shift one foot, and he cleared his throat.

"Eliza," he said, "you're a good girl; you did right to stick to your grandmother." He paused again. "I feel terrible bad; I don't know what to say to you."

"Well, I dare say we shall be good friends again some day, John," she said, straightening her back, and looking towards his figure at the gate. "Forgive and forget; that's the way to live."

"You're a good girl, Eliza," he said once more, and still waited by the gate. He could not go away. Eliza stooped down over the potatoes again. "You're a good girl," he repeated, "indeed you are; and a deal better than Lizzie Woodbridge," and he walked slowly away down the lane.

Eliza went on digging at the potatoes in the dark. In her heart she was very angry. "Why did he ever want to come courting me? Why did he come here at all? Nobody asked him. He pushed his way in, and now it's all over." She had to feel for the potatoes

with her fingers in the soil. She had already got enough, but she went on, forgetful of what she was doing, conscious only of the pain within her. "Ay, it's all over now; I mun just stay on here with granny; that's how it's got to be; nobody wants me now but her; I've done my duty by her, and it's cruel, cruel hard." She felt the tears running hot down her face, and several splashed on the back of her hand in the soil. "And this is all the reward I get," she went on thinking, pain gnawing her mind, "to be left out in the cold; no husband, no children, no pleasure. . . . Never a bit of pleasure all my life; not a atom; just the old grind, round and round. Yes," she thought, "it's been the same ever sin' I left school; all quiet and dull, and no pleasure." The pain became more than she could endure. She took up her basket. "I canna bear it; it's worse than death; there's no pleasure, nor no hope neither; it's all misery." She went into the cottage, her limbs drooped, as if they were made of lead and were too heavy for her. She sank down on a chair by the lamp and swayed her body slowly backwards and for-

wards. She raised her head with the eyes shut, and let it sink again, and her arms dropped into her lap.

She was roused by a sound overhead. Her grandmother had called her, but the sound was so faint it had scarcely reached her ears. She took the lamp and went quickly upstairs. The old woman had raised herself on one elbow, and her breath came desperately short. It whistled and rattled in her chest and throat. Her eyes were closed, and she looked mortally sick. She gasped and struggled to get her breath.

"O Lord, 'Liza—O Lord . . . I can't get my breath—it's killing me." Eliza hastily put an arm behind her, and propped her up with the pillows. She got out the bronchitis kettle from under the bed, filled it, and set it to boil over the flame. Then she went downstairs again and got out the loaf and flannel bag, and made a poultice. She came up again with it after a few minutes. The old woman was in the same position, struggling with suffocation. Her hair and face and the bed were wet with perspiration. Eliza opened her damp nightgown, and put the

poultice on her chest. She steamed the air about her face, and softened it, with the bronchitis kettle.

“O Lord—O Lord,” said the old woman in gasps, recovering her speech, “I shanna live through this night . . . my time has come.” Her chest rose and fell rapidly, the breath forcing itself noisily up and down her wind-pipe. Eliza gave her some medicine the doctor had supplied to ease the fits of retching. Then she went downstairs and made another poultice, hurried up again, and placed it on her back between the shoulder-blades. She sat by the bed holding her hand, and watched her struggles. The air was full of steam from the kettle. For a whole hour the old woman fought for breath; but gradually the breathing began to improve. Eliza encouraged her and kissed her. Time passed; and she raised herself on her elbow again.

“I’ve a good strong heart for a old woman,” she said in pants, “I thought it would have done for me—but I’m alive yet, ’Liza.” She lay back again; the breath was still laboured, but the inhalations were longer and stronger,



and were exhaled with relief. Once more Eliza went downstairs, piled up the kitchen fire, and came back and changed the poultices again. For yet another hour she sat up and watched. The old woman became comfortable. Eliza got out the Bible, and began reading it to her. Her voice took on a quiet monotonous tone. The oil in the lamp had burned out, and she had lit a candle. A huge shadow of her head and shoulders was thrown on the ceiling as she bent over the book. The old woman's eyes closed, and her breathing became softer and easier. Eliza read on for a long time in a steady monotone, till her grandmother fell asleep. Then Eliza shut the book and undressed herself, and lay down, drawing close to her, and put an arm round her, as was her wont.

"I love my granny," she said to herself, "and that's how it's got to be."

Two days later, as Eliza was doing her housework, she heard a sound of wheels, and looking out from the kitchen window, saw a tax-cart pass by over the green. John Hebborn was driving, and at his side sat

Lizzie Woodbridge, wearing a smart new hat covered with flowers. Soon afterwards the sound of bells came up from the village.

“Well, they are in a hurry!” thought Eliza.

## THE STOWAWAY

A BOAT was rowing quietly along the shore of the Sogne Fjord, near its mouth and looking toward the sea. In its stern sat the owner, holding the tiller, whilst a boy and a girl, his son and daughter, pulled at the oars. It was evening, and the mountains on either side of the Fjord were reflected for miles into the distance. Far away could be seen the edge of the open sea, with its strips of low-lying land and islands. Over these hung a golden haze, the day's last gift. The man in the stern was a robust and happy-looking bearded man. His daughter was a typical Norwegian girl, strong, broad-chested and broad-waisted, with a healthy, beautiful complexion. His son looked like an English boy. On the stern of the boat, just behind where the owner sat, were painted the words—"J. Holloway — Sandener." The boat quitted the shore, and made across for the

other side, where Sandener could be seen. It was a little wooden village, close beside a rushing river; it possessed a wooden hotel, and a wooden church and tower. Above it rose the mountains, with waterfalls streaming down their shadowy sides. J. Holloway was an important man in his town, and had a flagstaff in his garden. He could see his little house and flagstaff, somewhat separate from the rest, beyond the church tower. His eye wandered from this to the open sea and the golden light beyond. In that direction lay England and Hull. He became meditative. The still waters, the mountains, the sound of the oars, the evening light, and the occasional talk of the rowers—these things faded from his mind, and he journeyed back into the past, across the sea to Hull. This was what he remembered.

James Holloway had been out of work for ten weeks. During this period he had "eaten nothing," as we say of invalids or persons of abstemious temperament. He had not drunk as much as usual either; but he had drunk more than he had eaten. He

had a theory that beer was as nourishing as bread to a man of his constitution. It was all a matter of constitution. Some men grew fat on the drink, others grew thin; this was proved in every walk of life. He was one of those whom it nourished; and he was grateful to Nature for this mark of her favour. As he stood this morning in the road outside the docks at Hull, in the company of several hundred others of his kind, this peculiar constitution of his did not mark him out as being above the general average. The average was not a high one. The men were waiting to be hired, standing together in groups. It was six o'clock in the morning, and drizzling. The circumstances were depressing, yet there was an air of composure about the crowd. They sucked their pipes of foul tobacco, with an early morning relish; most of them had had some breakfast. They spat on the ground with decision, and when they did speak—for the most part they were silent—they spoke out loud and bold, or short and sharp, with a jest and an oath. The chins were bristly throughout. They all shaved once a week. There was



not a collar amongst them, but a great variety of knotted neckcloths; and there were great-coats of some kind or another, procured somehow or other, on the backs of all. There had been a long period of slackness in the Docks, and a slump in trade all through the town. The greater part of the men had earned next to nothing for two or three months past. Most of them had wives and families at home. A specialist in sociology could have passed an interesting morning, inquiring how these men and their families had lived during this period. But the results would not have worked out on paper. For none of these men knew how he had lived; and even their wives could not have explained the secret. According to all reasonable statistics, they ought not to have lived at all. It was a most peculiar state of affairs.

James Holloway was a bachelor; but he did not thank his stars for it. He was not of a grateful mind, and he was too full of theories. If he had had a wife, he theorized, she might have picked up a sixpence or two, now and then, and the children might have

got something out of the church, and after school hours; together, he thought, they might have got along better than he was doing singly. There were men who had found it so. He had a theory, too, that money was always money, however many there were to spend it, and that one and sixpence was always better than a shilling, whatever the company. This had been proved again and again to his satisfaction when clubbing together with his pals.

He waited and waited, with his hands in his great-coat pockets, now and then jogging his elbows against his sides. He had lived all his life, twenty-five years, in Hull, alternately working and loafing, either by inclination or compulsion. But he had a theory that his life had not yet really begun. Some day he was going to do better than he had done so far. That was quite certain. He never allowed himself for an instant to believe that the distressed and irregular condition was a permanent thing. It was merely temporary, and therefore supportable. He talked and laughed with two or three others, as they waited for work. There was

a faint blueness and bitterness, a touch of solemnity, lingering round the corners of his mouth and eyes, but scarcely noticeable, owing to the strong look of life and sense which animated his countenance, and those of his friends, as they talked and laughed in their abrupt, rapid, jerky manner. Discontent appeared chiefly in the filthy adjectives with which every substantive was heralded.

After several hours of the morning had thus passed, it became apparent that no more work was to be had that day. He went off into the town, walking up the street courageously as if he were in regular employment and going home to dinner. He spent the middle of the day as usual; that is to say, he did not know how he spent it; it spent itself. As usual, he was busy with his thoughts and theories, thinking over his prospects. He must do something—that was certain. It would not do to go on living in this way any longer. This sort of thing must come to an end. It was time he made a new start, struck out a new life. He had said the same for years past; he had said it oftener and oftener, and now he said it once

every ten minutes. When he was not talking to himself in this way, he was talking to his pals. They talked of every imaginable subject under the sun, but they arrived at no fixed opinions on any. At least the opinions were all fixed, but they were all conflicting. For instance, all were agreed that the life they were leading was a dog's life, not fit for a Christian man, and that something must be done to better themselves. This was one fixed conviction, and its friend and companion was that a man could not better himself, that there was nothing to do, and nowhere else to go. Both these opinions were clear and certain. Again, when politics came up for discussion, Jim Holloway was convinced that the Government were not doing their duty to such as himself; that they were allowing the blood and muscle of the country to be drained away; that they only talked, never did anything, and had got their posts through the influence of society women, and that the condition of the people in his town was a scandal to the country. Simultaneously, if properly aroused, he was always ready to swear by the

good old British Constitution, the Flag, the Throne, the Army, Navy, and the sporting Aristocracy. So, too, with religion, which was frequently discussed in the lodging-houses of an evening. He was perfectly convinced that it was all a humbug, a got-up affair—Noah's Ark and the Flood and all. The clergy and the bishops did it all for money. "Religion was civilization." This was the idea of one of the talkers in the lodging-house; and he had succeeded in making his meaning clear to all. God could not be good, if He sent evil and suffering. The whole thing was a lie; but civilization needed it. This was perfectly clear to the unsophisticated reasoning of all. Truth had only to be stated to be understood and believed. This was one opinion. The other was that something good, some fatherly power or destiny, which understood things, lay at the back of his life. This was also quite certain. Apart from the direct knowledge of the fact, it had been proved again and again. For he would certainly have died for various reasons, chiefly for lack of nourishment, long before, if life had not been



constantly supplied him—and so would they all have done. All the middle of the day he spent outside a public-house, cogitating these contradictory opinions, but especially about what he was going to do. For some reason he asked himself this question to-day with greater frequency and with more vital emphasis than before. "Must do something—this can't go on," he reiterated. He ran through all his old rejected schemes again for the thousandth time—emigration, enlisting, tramping into the country, going round the town once more.

In the midst of these thoughts, impelled by the certain conviction that something must be done, he found himself wandering down the street again. It was afternoon, and during all the period of the last ten weeks he had never before felt so empty and cavernous within. A crowd of people were going into a public hall, off one of the principal streets. Admission appeared to be free, and Jim drifted in with them, pondering on what he was going to do—on what he had got to do—rather than on what he was doing. He found himself at a political meeting.

The chairman, a small, fat, smiling gentleman, in a fur coat, was introducing the speaker. The chairman spoke with daintiness and grace, looking round on his audience and smiling, and clasping his two little hands together. He was enjoying himself. Then the speaker began, a gloomy man. James Holloway followed all that was said. He seemed to have two minds this afternoon. With one mind he followed the speaker, and understood all that he said ; with the other mind he was still determining that something must be done, that he must enlist, emigrate, cut his throat, or do something. The gloomy speaker was getting a little warmer. He had reached the glories of the Empire, the necessity for building it up, and doing all in our power to preserve it, and hand it on to our children. We must even be prepared to make sacrifices for it. Though in his own private opinion no sacrifice would be necessary, still we must be prepared to make sacrifices. James Holloway, along with the rest of the audience, loudly indicated his readiness to make a sacrifice. As he cheered, his mind Number Two was saying

that something must be done, that it could not go on, and that he must go up again to the paper mills to see if a job was to be had there.

The speaker was now threatening his audience. "Was England to become a second-class Power?" he asked them. Before asking this question he had paused; and he asked it, not triumphantly, but with a deadly significance. His voice lowered itself. "Was it possible that England might ever become a second-class Power?" He spoke as if alluding to one of those darker subjects which are not mentioned in polite society. A third time he repeated the question, in a grave and awful whisper. "Was there any one in that room who had ever faced the possibility of England's becoming a second-class Power—a Denmark, a Sweden, or a *Norway*?" James Holloway felt faint. Then the speaker recovered himself, and brought out his emphatic Noes. He passed on once more to Empire, to Royalty, the Flag, and the Army and Navy, in a grand peroration. Holloway, who sat at the back of the room, rose to his feet with many of the audience, and shouted. As he rose, it seemed

to him that he was indeed rising and rising. For a moment he thought that his spirit had left the body. Then he realized that he must be ill; and immediately fright seized him, and he turned sick and faint. He made for the door, and hurried out.

James Holloway had a theory that when a man was feeling ill and done-up, the best thing he could do was to go and work. This he had often proved in practice. He made up his mind on the spot, that he would go and work. Cost what it might, he would work before nightfall. He went down to the docks, and slunk along the wharves unobserved. Come what might, he would work somewhere, at something. It was the only way to cure himself. Heaven was propitious. In a quiet corner, against a lonely wharf, he observed a Norwegian schooner, unloading small baulks of timber. The baulks of timber were being thrown out by hand from the hold of the vessel. Two seamen stood on deck, catching them as they popped out of the hold, and throwing them with a clatter on to a huge pile that had formed itself on the wharf. Two other sea-

men stood on this pile, throwing the wood slowly about, so as to build and shape the structure, and allow room for more. James Holloway slunk alongside this pile of wood. For some time he watched the men at work. He caught the eye of one of the seamen, and winked. The big Norwegian stopped work, and straightened himself with a slow, pleasant gasp. Jim scrambled on to the pile, and began to throw the timber towards its farther end, so as to make room for more in the centre. The Norwegian smiled, and went on with his own work. Jim worked away with a will. It was a luxury to put out his strength again; and he felt better and better. Every moment he expected the mate to come and warn him off. The mate came to the edge of the vessel, and leaned his arm on the bulwarks, smiling ironically at Holloway. "You laike vurk?" he said. Holloway worked away in silence. The mate smiled a deeper smile. He remained lazily leaning on the bulwarks for a minute, and then returned to his post above the hold, catching the timber as it popped out. The vessel was being unloaded by the crew,



without any outside assistance but this voluntary aid proffered by our friend. They worked on till late. Holloway ventured no questions ; but they were evidently working overtime. Only one thought now occupied his mind. Would his services be recognized in any form ? His unchartered work was against the rules of the docks ; and they had not even asked for it. Yet he augured well from the mate's impassive look ; they were evidently in a hurry, as they were working late, and his work was a gain to them.

Presently the mate made a peculiar sound in his throat ; and they all stopped work. The mate leaned again on the bulwarks. The big seaman on the pile straightened himself once more with the same pleasant gasp. Slowly they all disappeared into the little fo'c'sle. Holloway stood on the pile in the gathering dusk, dismally watching them depart. The mate had now disappeared in the forward part of the vessel ; and his last hope was gone. Suddenly the mate's figure reappeared on deck. He looked at Holloway, and nodded his head casually towards the fo'c'sle.

Jim Holloway scrambled on board and, lowering his head, joined the other seamen in the fo'c'sle, which was about six feet by eight feet. A beautiful smell greeted his nostrils, of frizzled onions and potatoes, along with tobacco and oil and tar. One of the men was frying a mess over a little stove. A table in the centre was prepared for the meal, Holloway jammed himself down by the table on a chest, trying to take up as little room as possible. The three other seamen lay in their bunks, enjoying the luxury of relief from toil. They grunted to one another in Norwegian, paying no attention to Jim. The cook glanced at him and laughed, as he stirred his pan. The cook could speak English. "No work in Hull," he said, "very slack, all out of work." He smiled affectionately at his onions. Presently the fry was served up on the table. The seamen came out of their bunks, and all fell to. Jim Holloway never enjoyed a meal so much. Two of the hands were scarcely more than boys. They had fair hair and blue eyes, and looked fresh and blooming, with enormous shoulders encased in blue jerseys. On

Holloway's right sat an older man, in a pair of boots reaching above his knees, which he had not troubled to pull off. Opposite to him sat the cook. All five of them ate away with a relish ; a small lamp burned against the wall, and the smoke of the food went up from the table. The Norwegians became more talkative as they ate. Holloway thought that never had he seen four such pleasant-looking fellows. It was a luxury to him to rest his eyes on their contented faces. They paid but little attention to himself, and talked and laughed quietly to one another. It was a pleasure to hear them speaking in a foreign tongue, to watch their smiles and laughs and gestures, without knowing what it was they were talking about. The fo'c'sle was very warm. The men got out their tobacco, and began to smoke. They looked at one another through the smoke, now talking volubly. The cook began to hum, drumming his fingers on the table. He hummed louder and louder, and presently his humming broke into words, which he sang over to himself. When he reached a certain point in the song, the others

stopped talking suddenly and joined in. The cook had a pleasant voice, and he made the most of it. He came out now with the next verse in style, and the others all joined in again at the right moment. The song sounded very pleasantly and strangely in Holloway's ears; unlike anything he had heard before. Opposite him on the wall was a picture post card, representing a waterfall coming down a mountain-side into the sea; and Holloway kept his eyes fixed upon it. As the song rose and fell, Holloway became aware of the country to which these men belonged. He felt the atmosphere of the land from which they came; and it seemed to make the fo'c'sle fresher and purer. It was a happy land they belonged to, and one that was dear to them—a small land far away north, far away from his troubles in Hull. "Lucky chaps! Lucky beggars!" he thought to himself. He spat on the floor. He could scarcely restrain his emotion and envy. He had never been outside Hull himself, and yet he felt and understood, and knew that he understood, the sort of country these men came from. He watched the

Norwegians with closer interest and delight. Another of the seamen began to sing. One of the boys reached down a cardboard box from his bunk, and turned over a few letters, and photographs done up in newspaper. He took out a photograph of a girl with large eyes wide apart, and fair hair parted on her forehead, and plaited down her back. He looked at it fondly and winked at Holloway. Then he kissed it and held it in his arm, and smiled at Holloway. Then he replaced it carefully in the newspaper. Holloway swore to himself. The cook told him to sing them a song. He gave them as much as he could remember of the last music-hall song. His voice was nasal. He hoped to have made an impression, but, to judge from their faces, they did not understand his style and tone. At last he had to clear out. "Well, good night, mates, and thank ye kindly—much obliged, I'm sure." Somewhat to his surprise they held out their hands; and he shook hands all round. On the dark deck outside, he paused for a moment, and looked back with a sigh at the bright, steaming interior of the little fo'c'sle.

Then he slunk along the docks. He had a full belly, but no money in his pockets. Passing a deserted part of the wharf, he slipped into a storage shed, and presently came across an enormous empty packing-case, with straw in it, into which he climbed, and nestled down at the bottom. He felt tired, comfortable, and happy ; but he could not sleep. He was thinking of the Norwegian schooner, and the land she was bound for. They were off the day after to-morrow, he had gathered from the cook—lucky fellows.

All in an instant his mind was made up. He would go with them. Yes, this was what things had been working towards. He had got to do something, he must do something. Then he would go to Norway. His spirits rose wonderfully. Why, of course, it was just the thing. He would stow himself away somewhere in the hold. But what was he going to do when he got there ? He cared not a jot. Let them send him to quod, let them do anything with him, he wanted to see that little harbour, and the mountain, and the young woman whose photograph had been kissed. What was there to keep him in



Hull? When in doubt, do something, he said to himself, and fell asleep, and dreamed of the waterfall and the mountain. In his ear the music of the Norwegian song kept rising and falling rhythmically. He sat beside the waterfall, with his arm round the waist of a young lady.

In the grey of the morning, he awoke again. He remembered his decision of the night before, and felt doubtful. He was only a fool to think of such a plan. "Go to Norway, eh?" He laughed, and spat into the straw in which he lay. He lay there thinking for some time. Then he scrambled out and sloped along the wharf. It was drizzling, and just getting light.

Jim Holloway had a theory that no man could fight against Destiny. This had been proved again and again in his life. He had often thought of getting married, of finding a nice girl who would do him good; and he had remained a bachelor. That was Destiny. He had often thought of leaving Hull and making a fresh start somewhere else, making the most of himself, earning the respect of his fellow-men, and a regular wage; but

he had remained at Hull, in irregular employment, or out of employment. This was Destiny. He was always on the lookout for Destiny. His great-coat had come to him by Destiny. He had found it hanging on a paling. Destiny had ruled his life. Destiny now carried him up to the town. It first of all pawned his overcoat, and bought him two loaves of bread, some cheese, and a large stone bottle of water. It acted with infinite caution, and waited two days and a night. It rested his mind, and healed the pain of the last many weeks. It bade good-bye to Hull, and the drizzle, and the dreary tramp from dockyard to dockyard, and from one mill to another. He spent most of the day outside his usual pub. "Now what should make me think of going to Norway?" he kept saying to himself. And then he laughed to himself. He discussed a variety of themes, as usual, with a choice company outside the public-house. He felt his eyes twinkling as he spoke, and he kept smiling. He was wondering what they would say, if he told them he was going to Norway? Who could tell? It was just pure Destiny. He

had seen it last night in the fo'c'sle, and it was a place which would suit him, it was a place which was meant for him. This day and the next, as he waited for his schooner to be loaded up, and ready to start, were the happiest of his life so far. He was at last going to do something. For ten years past he had felt that Destiny was on its way; it was coming, and something would happen. Now he knew it had come. He smiled benevolently on his poor companions. He took the lead in the conversation. He was full of confidence and cheerfulness; and the spirits of his companions rose, they knew not why. Jim Holloway was conscious again of his two minds. With one mind he talked and jested and swore with his pals; with the other he knew that Destiny was at work, that a new life had begun. With one mind he talked sound sense and reason to his companions, with the other he cognized a project, the meaning and sense of which he knew it was impossible for him to explain to any mortal man. But the knowledge of this only made him happier. He thrust his hands deep down in his breeches pockets. Yes,

he was going away, going away the following night—where to he did not know, what to do he did not care—but he was going somewhere, and Destiny was taking him there.

He kept an eye on the schooner, until the loading-up for the home journey was completed. That night he went down to the docks about midnight. He had not the slightest doubt that he should be successful in stowing himself away. He had no difficulty in getting on to the wharves, and soon found his little schooner. There she lay, with her old-fashioned spars and rigging visible against the sky. Sure enough, he had nothing to do but drop quietly on board, and slip down into the hold. It was all as easy as possible. He met no policeman or dock-watcher anywhere on the wharves. A miscellaneous cargo had been shipped in the hold. Jim looked about for a comfortable corner. Doubts kept drifting across his mind. He was afraid, now and then, that he had perhaps gone off his head in doing such a senseless thing; but this doubt troubled him very little. He had a theory that when a man thought one thing, the

opposite was usually the truth; and this comforted him. He groped about with circumspection in the hold, cautiously lighting matches until he found a snug little corner right down in the cargo, where he could stow himself comfortably. There was even a shelf for his bottle of water, his two loaves, and his bit of cheese. He felt neither hungry, tired, nor thirsty, but perfectly normal. He curled himself up, with a sigh of satisfaction, and was soon fast asleep.

Bang, bump. . . . It was morning, and more cargo was being swung down into the hold. Jim had climbed down into the hold by the forward hatch, and he had scrambled aft. The stern hatch had been closed down, and he had had an idea that it was closed for good. Now to his surprise the light shone; it had been opened again. He heard the rattle of the steam crane, and big boxes began to swing down above him. Jim sat still, his heart in his mouth. Bump came a large case of several tons weight right above his head, entirely closing the aperture at the bottom of which he sat. He was shut in a trap. For a moment his head swam,

and he thought of shouting and disclosing himself. But in another moment Destiny presented itself to his reason. He was acting under compulsion ; this was only a friendly joke on the part of his guide. All was yet well—though pitch dark. He lay comfortably and quietly, penned in his little cabin. As soon as the hatch overhead was closed, and all sounds had ceased, he tried the strength of his prison walls. The cleft in the cargo which formed his prison was about four feet high and three wide. Consequently he could get his back against its roof, and use the whole strength of his body to lift. He put his hands on his knees, and put out his strength little by little. So great was the purchase that it seemed to him that nothing could possibly resist him. Yet the case never budged. It weighed tons. Again he put out the whole strength of his body. Its force appeared to him tremendous, but it was of no avail. Well, he had his bottle of water and his two loaves, and they would not be many days crossing the sea—then all would be well. He had tobacco with him, and lit his pipe and made himself comfort-



able. Presently he knew they were moving ; and before long they were out at sea. The ship was tossing and rolling ; he could hear the waves crunching against her sides, and rushing past them. It never occurred to him to be sea-sick, as his thoughts were busy. He had become happy again, now that they were off, as he smoked his pipe in the dark. It was madness from beginning to end, and he knew it ; but that was just the point. He could never have settled on such an expedition as this for himself—it had all been done for him. He had been waiting for years and years, and now his time had come. To think that Destiny should have taken him in hand like this, singled him out from his companions, and sent him on a voyage of faith. It was glorious. Of course it was all nonsense. What possible use was there in his going to Norway ? What in the name of fortune was he going to do when he got there ? What the devil had ever suggested it ? But it was just these arguments which proved the presence of Destiny. For, in spite of them all, he was going.

In the midst of these thoughts he fell into

a happy sleep ; then he awoke and thought, then he slept again. Time passed. Between sleeping and waking, and thinking and sleeping again, days passed by. It seemed to him that weeks, even months had passed ; but he decided that it was not more than a few days. Still, they must be already somewhere near Norway, he thought. So far, he had eaten and drunk nothing. He was saving his provisions up in case of bad weather and delays ; and he had felt no need of them, lying there sleeping. On waking from a nap some days before, as the time had seemed to him, he had felt hungry, and a trifle thirsty. But he had resisted the temptation to eat and drink ; and it had passed away again. Such a long while had passed since then, without his taking anything, that he began to look upon himself as a sort of fasting man. He had a theory that sleep was as good as food and drink, and he was proving it up to the hilt. Now, however, the time had come, he thought, to take a little food and drink. He began with a bit of bread, but found he could not eat it till he had drunk some water. He took a

refreshing gulp, and applied himself to the bread. But he could not get on with it; it seemed to stick in his throat. He took a little more water, not enough to satisfy him. He lay down and slept again, and awoke feeling thirsty. He then recollected a theory of his that, in the treatment of appetites, half measures were no use, and it was best to satisfy them fully, and so let them be. So he had a real good drink, wiped his mouth and corked up the stone bottle. Five minutes afterwards he felt thirsty again. This time he had to deny himself, but he could not sleep for thinking of the water in the bottle. He was also puzzled by this feeling of thirst. He could not make it out. He had drunk a good half-pint or more, enough to last a man who was not working, but just lying idle, as long as you like. Why should he feel thirsty again at once? The right plan, the normal plan was, to quench his thirst, and then go comfortably for twenty-four hours without any more drink. So he took another pull at the bottle, to make sure that the thirst was satisfied, and laid himself down to sleep. In three minutes he

was thirsty again. He saw now that he had a battle to fight, that an enemy had risen up against him. He could sleep no more, because this enemy grew. When he did drop off into a doze, the enemy took new and strange shapes. It was better to fight it waking than sleeping. It was not thirst merely that he suffered from, but fear.

Fear laid hold of him more and more ; an unknown horror of darkness lay before him. He had never been afraid of death. Death at this moment, in the open air and with his thirst quenched, would have been bliss. But death where he was, and with his thirst unsatisfied. . . . Every now and then he put his lips to the stone bottle, and enjoyed a few moments of exquisite pleasure. The thirst was momentarily relieved ; but the fear remained, and soon the suffering came back again. At last the water was all gone. His whole being became absorbed in one awful want. The very objects of his consciousness—the darkness, the walls of his prison, the empty bottle, the remains of the bread and cheese, his own body—these things ceased to be themselves, and became

one unspeakable thirst. He began to shout at the top of his voice. He put his back to the roof of his prison, and strained against it with his whole force. He shouted and shouted for days, it seemed to him. A raging madness took possession of him ; he flung himself about his prison, then he lay and wept and sobbed, sucking the salt tears into his mouth with his dry tongue. Then he cursed God, Creation, and Destiny, with every foul word known in Hull.

Sometimes there would come a lull in these paroxysms. Whilst lying in one of these calmer moments, half senseless, he suddenly noticed that the ship was steadier. The deafening sound of plunging and surging had given place to a loud cackling, as she rippled through quieter water. A wild hope sprang up in his breast. They must be reaching Norway. He had been weeks and weeks in his prison ; and the end of the journey must be close at hand. For a time his sufferings vanished, swallowed up by hope. Every moment he expected to hear even the ripple cease, and to reach the stillness of the harbour side. Hour after hour the water cackled

loudly past the ship's sides. He shouted again and again; but his voice was still drowned and powerless to carry. How many more hours of anguish before they reached the port? Time, as it passed, brought its inexorable answer. There was no end to the journey, there never would be any end to it. He would go mad and die long before the end ever came. The cackle of the stiller waters sounded everlastingly in his ears, and yet they never got to the shore. The ship was evidently moving, so there must be some breeze outside; yet the waves no longer rocked her, they only splashed and rippled round her. He argued and argued as to the meaning of this. Gradually hope gave way again to madness and despair. He went off his head once more, and raged about within his little tomb. Once more he found himself calm. It seemed to him that he awoke from a state of unconsciousness. The waters were still talking round the ship's sides, in the same loud and senseless manner. He found his mind strangely clear, and saw things in the light of reason. He had been a fool and a madman. It was all a lie, that



nonsense about Destiny—all day-dreams. This was the real truth; this was his awakening to the facts of life. He had always refused to face the truth, liked to live in a little world of his own imagination, and this was the end of it . . . this was the real truth . . . darkness and suffering, awful suffering. . . . “People would never believe what suffering is,” he thought, “they would never believe it, not if you was to tell them, till you was black in the face, they could not believe it . . . it’s worse than what anybody understands. . . . And this is truth, this is God’s blessed truth. I believed a fairy-tale, and I’ve got what I deserve.” He began to shout and scream once more; and then he fell by degrees into a state of coma.

As he lay unconscious, the ship came into port, after a long journey up the land-locked coast of Norway. Half an hour afterwards, he came to his senses again. All was still around him. For a while he thought that he was dead. Then he heard a sound overhead, and a crack of light appeared in the roof of his prison. “Help, help!” he

shouted, in a strong triumphant voice. Joy overpowered him, and quenched his thirst. Even in his excitement he noticed that his thirst was gone for the moment. He heard men walking above him, and he shouted again, strongly and joyfully. The case above began to shift, and in a moment he was out of his hole. "Water!" he cried, and scrambled on deck. He was struck blind by the light, and held out his hands, crying—"Water!" They brought him water and he drank, checking his greed with all his might. He did not wish to drown his life, now that he had just found it. He compelled himself to drink quietly. He kept his eyes tightly closed as he drank. An ocean of blinding light surrounded him, as though he were in the presence of God. His whole being was absorbed in joy, and intense, almost insufferable light, as he sipped the water of life. Presently he staggered to his feet. A hand was stretched out to help him; but he put it from him, and reached the bulwarks. The world began to appear to him, unfolding itself little by little out of a sea of glory. Overhead he became aware of a mountain,

its sides and summit steaming with a dazzling mist. Out of a golden haze on either hand appeared more mountains, and the sea, or a lake, he knew not which, reflecting one another into the distance. His vision became stronger and clearer. Now he saw that the sun was shining, and that waterfalls were streaming down the mountain-sides ; he could hear the fresh sound of them in the distance. The sky was blue overhead. At the foot of the mountain the corn was growing. The waterfalls dashed down the rocks, and tumbled into the fields, making rainbows above the corn. He staggered back again to his can of water, and sat down on the deck, with his back against the fo'c'sle wall. The seamen stood around him, smiling. He had his drink ; but they now acted as bread and meat to him, as he looked at their tanned faces and stalwart figures, warm in the sun. He felt very dazed and helpless as he lay on the deck, and wondered what they would do with him. Though he had staggered to his feet, he thought he was too weak to walk. The cook kept talking to him in broken English. The seamen had not been able

to do anything but smile so far ; but now the cook's expression became more emphatic.

"What you want? What you doing here? What you come over for?" Jim Holloway remembered himself. He scrambled on to his feet again. His head swam, and his knees began to totter. The cook caught him round the waist, but Jim put his arm aside. "Just give us a bite of something," he said, "and then I'll go and look for work," and he gazed up at the mountain overhead, standing firmly without assistance on the deck. He felt that, whatever happened, he must not give Destiny away again, but play up to it manfully. The cook smiled. He bent over the bulwarks and talked to a girl who stood on the wooden quay. Then he walked up the ship, talked to the mate, and came back to Jim, who was leaning on the bulwarks again, looking at the mountain. "You go 'long with her," he said, pointing to the girl. Jim stepped on shore bravely, and walked off with the girl down the sunlit road. The girl had blue eyes and a softly glowing complexion, a shawl was tied over her flaxen hair, her sleeves were

white, and she wore a blue serge skirt. Jim limped along beside her in his greasy green-black clothes. All his life at Hull he had never before felt so like a tramp and a ne'er-do-weel. In his excitement he kept explaining to her his condition and suffering in voluble English. They passed up a little stone path, through the hayfields, crossed a bridge over a rushing and roaring river, and came to a large substantial wooden hut. Here Jim was seated at a table, and given milk and bread and cheese, and a hundred comforts. His soul was fed with fatness. The mother of the household and her daughter attended to him, freely and kindly, and with a roughness which put him at his ease. He cracked jokes at them, and laughed as he soaked his bread in the milk and gained strength. The cook soon turned up from the ship. "Now you in luck, my friend," he said. "There is the pier building over there at Sandener, two kilometres, all short of hands, the men busy, milk the cows in the saeters. You get work on the pier." "I thought so," said Jim, and a smile of triumph lit up his face. He was shown some clean

straw in a barn next door, and rolled up for a ten hours' sleep. Next day he was off early. His sufferings seemed to have left no effect whatever. He walked lightly along the coast; presently he turned a corner of the bay; and a small village with a wooden hotel came in sight. Sure enough, a wooden pier was being constructed. He walked straight up to a little wooden office, and applied for work. The manager could speak English. There was a considerable colloquy. Jim explained that he had taken a passage over from Hull in search of work. The manager raised his eyebrows in astonishment. Jim told a string of lies in answer to his questions; he had heard, he said, in Hull that work was to be found in Sandener. The manager was baffled. He put back his cap and stared at the draggled figure. Then he engaged his services as a pile-driver at eighteen krone a week. Jim had a hard day's work. Now and then he feared that he was going to faint. He worked with four Norwegians, heaving up the ton-weight hammer, and letting it fall with a bang on to the pile. He marvelled at his own powers



of endurance after his sufferings. What refreshed him was the thought of Destiny. When he was on the point of giving in, the thought came to him, and a sensation of sweetness and happiness stole over him, renewing his strength.

The steersman came to himself with a start. They were close to Sandener; and the boat had entered the shadow of the mountain. The sound of the oars echoed louder. He steered towards the wooden pier. On it stood his wife, smiling and waving. They landed, made the boat fast for the night, and walked up all together to the house with the flagstaff. The mountain rose above his house, grey, vast, and barren in the gathering gloom. But it brought no chill or vague foreboding to his breast. For, in spite of his settled life and prosperity, he still loved Destiny.

## ANABASIS

ARTAXERXES, King of Persia, was meditating on the iniquities of his brother Cyrus. This brother, in whose veins coursed the blood of Cyrus the Great, had been appointed, at Artaxerxes' accession, ruler of the western half of the Persian Empire, the appointment having been made, not by Artaxerxes himself, but by their father, Darius, on his death-bed, who loved both his sons equally. The situation would have been trying under any circumstances, but it was rendered intolerable by the character of the younger brother. Instead of realizing the delicacy of his position, he had, from the moment of his appointment, persistently acted with the grossest disregard of it. Instead of presenting himself to his realm as the merely impassive representative of a remote glory at Babylon, he had governed it "not wisely but too well." Instead of acting as a

constant reminder to the restless West of the supremacy of the unchanging East, he had thrown himself into Western ideas, and had adopted Greek manners and culture. Worst of all, he had abandoned the military system of his ancestors with which the glory of the Persian Empire had been won, and employed Greek mercenaries in all his campaigns. For he was constantly at war, and though he was careful to explain to his brother by frequent embassies the necessity of these many and various campaigns, Artaxerxes was deeply dissatisfied. He detested above all this employment of Greeks. When he visited the tomb of Xerxes and his mother Atossa, he implored their august shades to forgive this rash impiety, and vowed to do all in his power to make amends for it. To this end he secretly consolidated the military resources of his own half of the empire, and at the same time pursued a "pin-prick policy" towards his brother, harassing and annoying him to the utmost of his power, short of open rupture. In pursuance of this policy he had just recalled to Babylon Cyrus' great friend and confidant, the satrap Artapates.

This man was satrap of the Greek cities in Ionia, and a devotee of Greek culture. Greek poetry and politics were to him what Greek soldiers were to Cyrus, and the two were fast friends. He was of princely family. It had long been the hereditary privilege of each successive head of his house to assist the Great King on to his horse when he rode abroad, and it was for the exercise of this privilege that Artaxerxes summoned him suddenly to his stirrup-iron at Babylon. On receiving the summons Artapates held a prolonged interview with Cyrus, at the conclusion of which he set out obediently on his journey to Babylon. Moreover, he dismissed all his Greek friends and dependents, changed the Greek attire which he had adopted, donned the trousers, long-sleeved overcoat, Phrygian cap, and wrist-bangles of the Persian nobleman, allowed his beard to grow long, and clipped it square in the Babylonian mode, and thus arrived at the capital more Persian than the Persians.

He was welcomed somewhat ostentatiously. A royal banquet was accorded him, and countless libations were poured out

to the shades of Cyrus the Great and Darius, while shafts of black suspicion shot at him from under the brows of their reigning descendant. But Artapates showed himself studiously Persian and loyal. He answered satisfactorily all the questions put to him as to Cyrus' military expeditions, and the distribution and employment of his forces. For six months he danced attendance on the king, as the most devoted of equerries, only varying his obsequious attitude with occasional permitted hours of familiarity, when over the wine he and his master talked lions and big game, till the stars paled. Gradually the suspicions faded from the monarch's mind, and his brow cleared. "After all, he is a good fellow," he said one evening, to himself, "he studies my tastes; he is a Persian and a sportsman," and pledging the satrap in a fresh cup of wine, he turned up his sleeve and showed him an old hunting scar, left in his arm by the teeth of a lion, of which he was mightily proud. The same evening Artapates broached to him his wish to go for a two months' hunting excursion in the Upper and Northern regions of the

Euphrates, and he had no difficulty in obtaining permission.

So Artapates left Babylon again and hunted the wild ass on the banks of the Araxes, a northern tributary of the Euphrates. They were on the edge of the historic hunting-ground of many dynasties of Persian and Assyrian kings, but to the disgust of his company the satrap pottered in the neighbourhood of the river and did no lion-hunting. His old shikari could give the men no satisfactory reason for their master's conduct. One day, however, a lion made its appearance. Artapates himself caught sight of its brown tousled head and thin flanks as it crept from rock to rock amongst the reeds. They had just stampeded a herd of wild asses in the bed of a small stream. "Lion!" he shouted, drawing his bow to the full; but his view was blocked by his old shikari, who rode up pointing vehemently in the opposite direction. "Lion!" he said again angrily. "The Messenger!" said the old man, and Artapates turned round. A naked runner was approaching, holding to the stirrup of one of the huntsmen. When



the pair arrived the runner prostrated himself and handed Artapates a message inscribed on wax. In a very short time Artapates was back in his pavilion, having forgotten the lion.

The message ran as follows:

“Cyrus to his friend Artapates, much greeting. My army is prosperous and my provisions are plentiful. I am two days’ journey from Thapsacus. The natives inform me that the Euphrates can be crossed on foot this season. If you are near, see that they provide me a good provision market at Thapsacus. Your letter was received. It was well done that the King suspected none of these things when you left Babylon. It is now a fortnight since I told the army that we are going up against Babylon. The Greeks murmured, but they were persuaded. Make haste to join me at Thapsacus. Be well and strong!”

So Artapates struck camp at last, and journeying night and day reached Thapsacus in forty-eight hours. Here the army was

already expected. Outside the mud walls of the village horses and oxen were picketed, and the market-place was full of wagons, packed with corn and provisions, which had been driven in by the villagers. Cyrus' scouts had already been across the river. There were other signs also of the approaching troops. Far away across the desert, beyond the opposite fringe of the Euphrates' bank, faint clouds of dust were forming themselves, announcing the immediate arrival of the columns. Artapates sent messengers across to announce his presence to Cyrus. He then pitched his camp on a flowery bend of the river-bank, and eagerly watched the opposite shore. A controversy was raging in his camp. Some of his men said that Cyrus was marching on Babylon to seize the throne. Others ridiculed the notion, and said that the Great King was to hold a review of all the forces of the Empire, and Cyrus brought his army for that purpose. Others said he was marching against the Kurds in Armenia, and would not go near Babylon. As the day wore on moving bodies of men were seen half a mile off on the

opposite bank ; the details of a camp began to form themselves along the river's marge, and presently at evening the broad belt of western light on the horizon was crossed with countless strings of smoke, as Cyrus' army began to cook its supper.

About this time Artapates noticed a man coming across the river. He was mounted on a white pony, and was picking his way carefully ; there was as much sand and shingle in the river-bed as water. As he drew nearer, Artapates recognized that the man was a Greek. His bare knees, the loose tunic drawn in at the waist, the broad hat on the back of his head, and the rough stick which he held in one hand, all betokened the simple style of the Greek. As his little pony neared the bank, the satrap hailed him and made him welcome. They were soon deep in conversation. He had come over, he said, on his own account to test the crossing ; he formed one of the contingent of ten thousand Greeks whom Cyrus had brought with him. He had so much to tell that Artapates led him back to his tent, and ordered wine and refreshments to be set

before him. He talked on, and gave the satrap the fullest information as to the progress of the expedition since it left Ephesus. He told his story admirably, but it soon appeared that he was not satisfied. He hinted at strong discontent amongst the Greeks at their treatment by Cyrus. The army had been informed that the expedition was against the Pisidians. They had passed through Pisidia without striking a blow. Then at last, when they were a week beyond Pisidia, still in ignorance, the objective of the expedition was disclosed to them. Artapates tried to reassure him. "All goes well so far," he said; "half our work is done successfully. Nothing remains but to continue in the same fortunes."

"Much then remains," said the Greek. "The ingenuity of fortune is great, and to tell as much as half its meaning is hard. Our war lies behind us, there in Pisidia; the situation in front is still new to us Greeks, and the climate there unknown."

"You will never regret that you came," said the satrap; "you have never seen Babylon, it is true, but you know us Persians."

■

Trust Cyrus, and take me too into your confidence ; I know something of those regions. What do you fear to lose ? ”

“ Nothing,” said the Greek, “ for we are already launched ; if we are to lose we have lost already. But there are other considerations. Our eyes in Greece are not just like your own in Asia. Some things we see too well, and some we cannot see as we should. I was brought up in Athens, and have listened to Socrates. I have heard there much talk about justice, and as to what it is. It is not, I suppose, the same in all countries ? ”

“ It is everywhere the same,” said the satrap ; “ but wherever you meet with it, be sure that the hand of the Great King has never reached so far. Now Cyrus is different. If Cyrus ruled in the East, then we should see what we should see.”

“ So Cyrus goes to Babylon,” said the Greek, “ to establish justice in the earth. Very good, very good—that is a new idea.”

“ It is partly true,” said the satrap. “ Cyrus is a Western in many of his thoughts. He loves freedom, he is just and generous, he

governs well; but there are, as you said just now, other considerations. You Greeks understand but little of our politics here. You are a great people, and we purchase your help, but the game and the final check-mate concerns you not. You shrug your shoulders at the idea of Cyrus going up against Babylon in the cause of good government, and you are right. It is not that which sways him. The peoples of the East are the corn which the Great Kings mow and thresh, and your Western ideas of justice and liberty will not alter those harvests, any more than they will change the seasons. Now this is a stormy season. The clouds have been gathering and they must break. Ask the thunder-cloud why it bursts in lightning, but do not ask why Cyrus makes war on his brother. You are a reasonable people, you Greeks," he went on, his wrist-bangles jingling as he gesticulated, "all your motives are intelligible. Your literature, your art, your language, it is all admirable! Your freedom, your democracies, your political institutions, they are wonderful—but," the satrap heaved a deep sigh, "they are



not for us. The magnets which draw your metals have no influence on ours. Babylon is our lodestone—Babylon with its ever-changing dynasties, its many-tongued populations, its age-long life, of which you Greeks know nothing. We are bound to that wheel, and we rise and fall and are broken whether we will or no.”

“Your pedigree, indeed,” said the Greek, “is ancient and chequered. But this surely is something new, that ten thousand Greeks should follow you to Babylon, and that too without any will on our part, without even knowing where we are going until we are half-way there.”

“What have you to fear?” said the satrap. “You are soldiers of fortune, and your fortunes will be made. I thought that one free Greek was worth a regiment of slaves.”

“That is true,” said the other, “and the Greeks will win. The Greeks will certainly win.”

“Well said, young man,” said the satrap, rising to his feet. “The holy Gods will confirm those words, and Cyrus, too, shall

hear of them." He went to the door of the tent, and drawing aside the awning looked out into the night. The watch-fires of Cyrus' army were twinkling all up and down the opposite shore as far as the eye could see. It had been arranged that the young Greek was to spend the night in Artapates' encampment. His name, it turned out, was Xenophon, and his city, as he had said, was Athens.

Artapates' mind was so full of the events of the day, and with thoughts of the march that lay before the army three hundred miles down the Euphrates, that he found it difficult to close his eyes. He had scarcely sunk to sleep, it seemed, when he was awakened by his old shikari with news that the army had begun to cross. He was quickly outside his tent. The huge river-bed which a few hours before had been piled with black darkness, had now grown faintly luminous in the grey dawn. From far away across its misty bulk came a sound of shouting, and a distant splashing of the waters was audible, announcing that the soldiers were already in the river. Down by the

water's edge he could see the young Greek standing apparently in prayer. His hands were raised, his head was crowned with a loose garland of anemones, and his face was turned toward the light in the east. The satrap himself ordered a bowl of wine, and poured a libation into the Euphrates. As Xenophon joined him he handed him the bowl, uttering the words, "To Zeus Saviour and Victory." The Greek repeated the words and raised the bowl to his lips.

The sun began to rise, and through the mists the shouts of the men and splashing of the waters could be heard more plainly half-way across the river. As the vapours melted, the thin streams and channels of the shrunken river became visible with dark belts and pools of water running between the banks of sand and shingle. And now the men could be seen. Here and there they appeared breaking through the mists, now running across the dry banks, now splashing through the shallows, now churning the stream knee-deep, now up to their breasts in the dark waters. As they slowly forded the deepest places, they held their shields above

their heads, and so slow was their progress they appeared to be almost stationary. At last they came swarming and dripping out of the river, and gained the bank with loud shouts. Some shouted the names of famous cities, others of their gods and goddesses. They swept on, marching with little formation, but, in obedience to the shouts of the lochagi, or captains of companies, they kept lessening their front, and wheeling to the right marched on down the river. The Greeks marched in a free and easy and outwardly undisciplined style. Many of the men had packed their armour into their shields, which they had tied on to their backs, the hollow side outward. Some were without arms or accoutrements of any description, having found room for them on the wagons. Hundreds of stout walking-sticks were to be seen in the ranks, and the majority wore signet-rings, which gave the wearer an important air. All were in a state of high elation at their successful passage of the Euphrates. "Splendid fellows, splendid fellows," said the satrap again and again, as they streamed continually by, all the early hours of the morning.

The sun shone brightly, the mist was gone, and the river-bed already looked hot, the air above the shingle beaches beginning to quiver. Far and wide they could see the wonderful spectacle of the crossing army. The Greeks were still coming over in their long loose lines. Higher up the head of the barbarian infantry column was discernible, crawling like a swarm of bees over the farther bank, and like another moving stream obliterating the Euphrates. The air was filled with the rush of the waters, threshed by innumerable feet. Down below, the baggage train was crossing. The tilted awnings of the wagons could be seen swinging above the shallows. The broad backs and lowered heads of the oxen were visible, as they laboriously stemmed the blue waters, and the shouts of the drivers could be heard goading them on. Here and there a red patch indicated the long riding-coats of the Persian officers, as they galloped to and fro, ringed round with shower-baths of spray.

At last Xenophon pointed down the river and exclaimed, "There is Cyrus!" Some way below them a group of forty or fifty

horsemen had taken up their stand on the bank where the wagons were coming out of the river, and Xenophon and the satrap rode off towards them. The staff were watching the wagons get up the bank, and presently they saw that most of them had dismounted, and made their way on foot to some wagons which were in difficulty at the bottom of a causeway which had been dug in the bank. When the pair came up, Cyrus was sitting on his horse alone, surrounded by the empty saddles of his staff. He was a big man, wearing the usual long red coat and military buskins of the Persian officer, and only distinguished by the jewelled tiara in his cap, which flashed in the sun. His face was burnt a fiery red, and was suffused with a jovial smile as he watched the efforts of his staff, round the refractory wagons. His enormous black beard and moustaches were shot with grey. He greeted Artapates delightedly, Western fashion, without ceremony, and was immediately immersed in conversation with him. He inquired about the state of affairs in Babylonia, and wished to know what attitude of mind his brother



Artaxerxes and his mother Parysatis had shown towards him. He congratulated Artapates on the successful outcome of his mission at Babylon, and spoke with elation of the secrecy with which his march had been effected. He questioned him minutely about the route and the supply of provisions obtainable on the way. As they talked, the staff reappeared, and mounted their horses again, laughing and wiping the mud from their long red skirts and boots. Seeing them all in their saddles again, Cyrus clapped heels to his horse's side. "Now on to Thapsacus," he said, and they rode off at a hand-gallop towards the village.

Even before Artapates left Ionia, it had been arranged that he was to take command of the barbarian contingent from Lydia on rejoining the army, and he rode back up the river in search of them, since they were in the rear of the army. He passed great bodies of cavalry, the foremost of whom had begun to come out of the water. Far and wide the river was foaming and spouting under their horses' feet. Higher up the barbarian infantry columns began to pass.

They came on in densely packed lines, small, dusky, sun-blackened, dejected-looking men. Unlike the Greeks, they showed no sign of elation at having crossed the river, but marched in silence; only an infinite swish, swish came from their moccasined feet as they moved in the grass. Between the ranks marched the officers, each with a heavily thonged knout in his belt. Meanwhile Artapates' servants were busily engaged packing their master's plate and his ivory bedstead with silver feet, without which he never travelled. Just as the wagons were getting under way, two palanquins appeared on the bank, borne by black slaves, and followed by a numerous train of horsemen and wagons. This was Syennesis, Queen of Cilicia, who had accompanied the expedition since it had passed through her country; with her was a lady from Miletus, a beauty, and a friend of Cyrus. The pagoda-like corners of the palanquin were hung with bells, which tinkled as they moved. Still the barbarian infantry trudged silently by in their thousands, until at length through the dust and heat and haze Artapates recog-

nized the red tunics of the contingent which he was to command. He searched out his lieutenants, and after greetings and congratulations took up the march with them.

His officers were delighted to learn that only seven weeks before the Great King had no information of Cyrus' advance. They eagerly discussed the prospects of the campaign, and its conditions were variously estimated. It was generally thought that they would reach the capital in four weeks' time, and that Artaxerxes would not have had much more than two months to concentrate his forces. They spoke of the wonderful success and speed with which the march had hitherto been carried on, especially in the easy crossing of the Euphrates, which they declared was a miracle. As to the forces which the Great King might have congregated at Babylon, opinions here differed very much, but it was generally agreed that the ten thousand Greeks were immensely superior as a fighting force to anything that Artaxerxes could put into the field.

So the great army continued to march

southward and eastward, with the River Euphrates as its inseparable companion. At the end of a fortnight they reached the confines of Babylonia and the character of the country changed. The river had been flowing through a barren and wild country, the fringe of the great desert of Arabia, but now corn began to grow up to its banks, and fine flocks of sheep and cattle came down to water in it. Villages and farms with towers and mud walls were seen, and canals fringed with date-palms were frequent, built partly for irrigation, partly to carry the corn-barges up to Babylon. Here at last were signs of the enemy. Bodies of cavalry were sighted, and presently a great smoke in the distance, rising in all directions across the line of advance, indicated that the corn-fields and farms were being destroyed. Cyrus now began to expect battle. Hitherto speed had been his one object, but now the army advanced cautiously, each contingent observing its own position and ready to deploy for action. Days passed, however, and nothing was seen of the enemy, except small bodies of his retreating cavalry. Now they

came across large and extensive earthworks which had been thrown up and abandoned, and traces were everywhere observable of great bodies of men and horse retiring before them. The information which reached Cyrus was scanty and contradictory, one thing only being clear, that the enemy had evacuated a position and were retiring before their advance. At length they came within seven days' march of Babylon, and still the enemy had not given battle. They were encamped this evening, as usual, on the banks of the Euphrates. Artapates and Xenophon had ridden all through the camp at nightfall, marking the disposition of each contingent. An intimacy had sprung up between them, and they had had much intercourse and talk on the route. Their marching days had further been beguiled by the society of the ladies, Queen Syennesis and the lady from Miletus, to whom Cyrus had introduced them. Many pleasant evenings had been spent encamped by the river, after the day's marching was over; and much talk and laughter and even music had been indulged in. For Queen Syennesis had

brought in her train a famous choir of Mariandynian singers. This evening the satrap and the Greek found the ladies couched in the open air reclining at their table, which was spread on a grassy promontory of the river-bank. Darkness was falling and a silvery moon had begun to glitter above the desert shore of the Euphrates. All round them the tents and pavilions glimmered in the soft light; for Artapates' own encampment had been pitched on the same peninsula. The ladies' chosen spot for dining, lit with a few lamps, was so close to the river that the sound of the waters could be heard pulling at the reeds; whilst all up and down its margin the frogs were croaking in loud chorus. A cloud of small white moths fluttered everywhere about the beds of reeds and round the lamps.

"So Artaxerxes refuses battle," said Queen Syennesis, after the two soldiers had been greeted, "and we shall soon be in Babylon. Well! I am sorry. This marching life is pleasant. I would we might do the same every year."

"It is too uncomfortable," said the lady



of Miletus, "the heat by day is stifling, and Cyrus marches too fast."

"You have but to say the word," said the satrap. "I thought you ladies were impatient to reach Babylon, and therefore Cyrus hurried the army."

"Cyrus pays no attention to us," said Queen Syennesis. "He is like our friend the Greek here. He thinks only of the soldiers' provisions, and how many parasangs to the next village."

"My only thought is that your table may be supplied," said Xenophon.

"Incredible," smiled the lady of Miletus. "Well! it is a lovely night, and to recover one's temper is an agreeable occupation. Where are the musicians?"

The musicians were sent for. These men came from the shores of the Caspian, and wore long flowing robes, and beards, and tall dark hats. They sat in a half-circle on the bank, and began their chant, accompanying it with pipes and the muffled beating of a tom-tom. The music was very small and soft, and was intended to imitate the moaning of the wind and the rustling of the reeds.

Their songs were dirges, about dying lovers and fallen kings.

"Let us go no farther," said Queen Syennesis, as the singers finished. "Let us remain here for ever, on this grassy promontory, and listen to the musicians and watch the moths on the water. See! how they whirl, dancing round and round. They are like ghosts. Let us obey the peaceful anarchy around us—the river, the breeze, the moonlight, the moths—they have no kings to rule over them, and their expeditions are without guile."

But Artapates began to explain to them the probabilities of the immediate future. He declared that sedition must have broken out in Babylon, and that the Great King was unable to give battle. He said that they would march in without striking a blow, and after that he began to dilate on the changes which Cyrus would introduce when he ruled the Empire. At last, reluctantly, the party broke up and they retired to rest.

Next day, however, the enemy made his appearance. The army was not so well prepared as it might have been, owing to the

fact that they had begun to hurry again, impressed with the idea that Cyrus wished them to get on fast, and they were tired of expecting attack. As the morning wore on, it became more and more clear that the enemy were present in great force ahead of them. A smother and turmoil of dust was seen rising in all directions across the broad plain, and numbers of Cyrus' cavalry were galloping in with news that the enemy were approaching, and that Artaxerxes himself was at their head. Artapates had wheeled his Lydians into battle formation; and, having received no word from Cyrus, rode back in search of him through a scene of much confusion. Amongst other causes of disturbance the slingers and archers, hurrying to the front, were running through the stationary troops, carrying commotion, and raising such a cloud of dust that Artapates often groped his way in a fog. When at last he reached Cyrus, he found that an altercation was proceeding between him and the Greek generals. Cyrus said that the Greeks should attack the centre, where Artaxerxes himself was reported to be. The chief of the Greek

generals, Clearchus, could not agree. The Greeks, he said, were on the right ; they were not yet armed ; it was too late now to effect the manoeuvre. He shrugged his shoulders as he spoke, seated on his thick-set iron-grey charger. He was a hard-visaged man, with beetling black eyebrows, and his face wore its habitual scowl. At length, still shrugging his shoulders, he said he would see to it that things were done as well as they could be, and the next moment, followed by the other Greek generals, he had disappeared into the dust-storm on the edge of which the group had been standing. The matter was apparently left undecided. Xenophon, still mounted on his white pony, rode up to Artapates. "Zeus Saviour and Victory !" he said, holding out his hand. "Do you remember the morning at Thapsacus, when the Greeks crossed the river first ? That is the watchword for to-day. It is a good omen. Zeus Saviour and Victory !" He wrung the satrap's hand, and the next moment had disappeared into the same cloud of dust as the Greek generals had been lost to sight in.

On the right by the river the Greeks were arming themselves in their usual leisurely manner. They spoke no word to one another, but silently looked to their straps and buckles, every now and then raising their eyebrows, as their eyes swept the plain opposite. It seemed as if all Babylon were now gathered there before them. The great dust-clouds had emptied their contents. Every hill, every bit of rising ground, every bright patch of corn, every field of grass was crowded with spears and standards. Xenophon sat on his pony close to the river. He found it impossible to believe that a battle was about to take place, as he looked at the bright array. The braying of the horns, thumping of the drums, the shouted words of command, and now and again a yell of excitement diminished by the distance were acutely audible in the preternatural stillness of the atmosphere, and close at hand he could hear the river gurgling past the reeds. Now the Greeks were armed. Their six-deep line was a mass of armour, stretching for half a mile and more inland from the river, and shining with the dull blue glow

of well-oiled, well-tended steel. The rows of round-casqued, plumeless helms pulled down over the faces with two eyeholes in each vizor presented a terrifying and savage aspect. It seemed as if some common wave of national hatred sharper and deeper than all ordinary feelings had risen to the surface and was holding them motionless and set like a steel-toothed trap, ready to snap and spring.

At this moment Cyrus, followed by his staff, was seen riding down the line of battle. Now his head turned towards his own ranks, whom he was addressing as he rode slowly onward. Now it turned towards the foe, whose forest of spears were within half a mile of his own. When he got within earshot of the Greeks, he reined in, turned curtly, and began to ride slowly back down the line.

The next moment the watchword for the advance passed down the Greek line. Each man repeated it to his neighbour, and it ran quickly through the ranks. There was a pause, and then simultaneously the whole body stepped off, and walked forward over the grass with long, stiff strides.



The Greeks had started before the rest of the army. It was not Cyrus who gave the word, but Clearchus. On seeing that they had started without his word, Cyrus galloped back to the centre. A standard was raised high above the horsemen, and a confused mass of cavalry started towards the enemy's centre. He himself rode at their head, surrounded by three hundred Persian noblemen. Artapates was immediately behind him. The Greeks broke into a run as they approached the foe. As they ran, the tension of the last hour vented itself in a mighty shout; and not for the first time in history that shout alone proved too much for the people of Babylon. Had the officers' lashes been twice as thick and a hundred times as numerous, they would not have persuaded their men to stay. Even the drivers of the chariots, which had iron knives attached to their wheels, leaped out of the cars and fled on foot. Many of the terrified teams charged the Greeks, who simply opened their ranks and let them pass through with shouts of derision. One man only out of the whole ten thousand was cut down by the chariots.

The men shouted to one another to keep touch, and not to pursue too fast or far, but the warning was unnecessary. There was no danger; the enemy made no attempt to outflank or cut them off. In the afternoon the Greeks halted by the river and rallied their forces. Presently they were aware that what seemed like a new army, chiefly of cavalry, was bearing down upon them. They raised the pæan again, and charged with a like result. This time they pursued the foe till sunset. Outside the village of Cunaxa, they ascended a little hill, and seeing the plain beyond full of Persians still running, Clearchus decided to stop and bivouac for the night.

Before this Xenophon had halted and ridden back. During the confusion and turmoil of the day he had no clear idea of what had taken place elsewhere, and now in spite of the victory his mind was full of forebodings as to the future of the Greeks and the fate of Cyrus and the rest of the army. Never had he seen such a fight before. It was racing, not battle, and the opposing foe appeared not an army, but a panic-struck

population. He reached the river and made up it, intending to make for the camp of the night before. It was evening, and the banks and immediate neighbourhood showed no trace of struggle. The water murmured over the shallows as it had done the evening before; the reeds rustled and specks of foam on the sandy shore quivered under the evening breeze. All else was still and silent. His little white pony was exhausted. Turning a sudden bend in the bank, he came upon some men drinking from the river. Some were lying in the reeds with their heads over the stream, others were sitting by the edge of the track. Their large round shields were scattered about the bank, and he saw they were Greeks.

“Who are you?” he called out.

“The Camp Guard,” came back the answer. Several men sprang up and came towards him.

“What of the Greeks?” the leader asked.  
“How have they fared?”

“It is spoken in a word—they have conquered,” said Xenophon.

“The Gods bless the messenger,” said the

spokesman. "The Greeks have conquered," he called out to the men behind.

"What of Cyrus and the rest of the army?" said Xenophon.

The other averted his eyes, and a look of painful constraint and embarrassment came into his face.

"Where are they?"

The man shrugged his shoulders; he looked at his comrades and said nothing.

"What has befallen them?"

"Nothing good," he said at last.

"Have they suffered something?"

The spokesman swept his right palm swiftly over his left, and then blew on it, as if puffing something away.

"Where are they? What has become of them?"

"There!" said the soldier. "There on the high ground amongst the corn! Do you see?" He pointed towards a low hill which rose gradually some distance away. The corn which covered it was brightly lit with the last rays of the sun, and it seemed on fire with the rich light, save for countless dark patches with which the hill-side was covered.

“Those are the Carians lying there,” said the man. “Thousands of them, one on the top of the other. They were surrounded. Look beyond them, by the spur of the hill, in the grass. Do you see the red? Those are the Lydians. They wear red tunics. They were ridden down by the chariots. Cyrus fell there,” he turned round, pointing to a farm, from which the smoke of a conflagration was still rising, “just beyond the trees there; they have cut off his head and his hands. All his staff are dead. Can you see the camp? Right yonder—there are some tents still standing. The Persians pillaged it all the afternoon. They carried off Queen Syennesis and the other lady. Some of them fought with us, but not for long. They have gone now. They are afraid of the Greeks, and have gone to look for them. Where are the Greeks, sir?”

Xenophon directed the men how to find their comrades. They could give him no details of the defeat or of the slain; they only knew that Cyrus' army had been out-flanked and completely crushed. Part of it they said had run away. They quickly packed their armour on their backs and

swung off up the river. They were elated by the news he had brought them, and though they had showed unmistakable signs of hard fighting, he could hear their voices long after he had left them, sounding fresh and cheerily in the dusk. They were marching again with the utmost carelessness, as though out of range of any possible foe.

Xenophon moved onward along the bank in the gathering dusk. Soon he began to recognize the scene of the encampment of the previous night. He saw the wide sweep of the river-bank forming the promontory on which Artapates and Syennesis had been camped. It was plain that everything was deserted. The moon was rising on the farther side of the Euphrates. By its light he could see that the tents were all thrown down, and the camp pillaged. He saw the great pavilion of Artapates with its awnings, and canopies drooping in a confused mass from some of the slanting poles that were still standing. A silver bowl which had been overlooked by the spoilers lay with its side crushed, near the entrance of the tent. Inside no one was stirring. No resistance seemed to have been made. The ivory



bedstead was broken up, and its silver feet wrenched off. He listened in the stillness for any sound of life or even for the groans of some wounded servant, who might have been expected to have shed his blood, defending his master's property. Suddenly he was startled by the sound of voices. They seemed to come from the direction of the river, but the sound rose and fell so fitfully that for a moment he thought it was the breeze rustling in the reeds, or the water whispering over the shallows. Next moment the muffled rhythmical beating of a drum came unmistakably to his ears, and he recognized the music of the Mariandynian singers. He looked out from the tent again, and turned his eyes in the direction of the river. A thin skein of mist, lit by the moon, hung low down over the deep grass of the promontory, and above it he now discovered the head and shoulders of a man coming towards him. As he came near, his grey beard was visible in the moonlight, and he recognized the old shikari.

The old man knew the white pony, and came up to Xenophon. "We found his body on the field, sir. It is down by the

river, where the singers are. He was lying close by Cyrus. They cut off Cyrus' head and hands, but they left the others. You will find him down there." Xenophon rode on, and now he could see the singers sitting in a half-circle with their backs to the water. In front of them the body was lying covered with a cloak. They were chanting a dirge, accompanied by the wail of the reed instruments and soft throbbing of the drum ; their black hats stood out against the silvery spaces of the river. They paid no attention to Xenophon as he drew near. He kneeled down, and uncovered the satrap's face, and remained for a long while gazing at it in the moonlight, and listening to the music, and to the ceaseless flow of the river, as it glided on toward Babylon. A new generation of moths fluttered over the surface of the water, and he thought of the satrap's broken purposes, and wished that he too might lie still and quiet for ever. But after a while his thoughts changed, and before he rose to his feet he was thinking of the ten thousand Greeks, and what was now to be their fate with over a thousand miles of hostile territory between themselves and home.

## A VISIT

THE way was rough and steep, and the litter swayed and jolted uncomfortably. The discomforts of the great man, penned behind the hot curtains, were probably greater than the painful exertions of his bearers. But it would have been worse if he had stayed at home. The households of Rome were engaged in celebrating the feast of the First of March, the Matrons' festival, and all the women were up in arms. Even in his own house, where each detail was regulated to increase his dignity and place, he felt somehow unimportant. Everywhere in the streets there was an alien, enthusiastic bustle, and men went about their business, disconcerted, as though they could no longer believe that it was the only thing that mattered. Certainly, it was no place for a man, and flight was best. But it was a whole world of dull care that the slaves carried up into the Sabine hills. The

price of corn, the responsibilities for clients, the complexity of the Augustan burdens, the soul-disturbing cases of distant corners of the world, were all jolted up and shaken together between sleeping and waking as the litter climbed the road in the hot spring sunshine. Behind them lay the city, and before it was out of sight the curtains of the litter opened, and the melancholy head of the occupant appeared, looking back at it. There it lay, beside the Tiber, the monstrous city, where all the money in the world owned allegiance, and where a good part of it flowed through the fingers of his own secretaries. It was time he left it behind him for a few hours, and a peculiarly appropriate day to dine with a bachelor friend. They entered the folds of the hills, and presently reached the little farm. Here the water tinkled down from the rocks, and the goat-bells tinkled in tune to it, the streams hurried through the meadows, and the woods grew up to the summit of the hills. The servants were all out to welcome the great man. In the descent from the chair, the walk along the flagged stones, the entry into the cool dark

hall, not one possible need of the litter's late burden was neglected. But there was no poet there to welcome his guest. Where could he be? What was he doing? The servants placed the great man in the porch, from whence he saw Soracte, in a dim haze, and the orchard and the grey rocky cliff from which the water spouted and trembled among the trees, but no poet. His master was holding a sacrifice, said the slave, and would be with Mæcenus immediately. The household tradition was intimate and perfect. The feelings of the great man were secured from all offence, but not from curiosity. "On the Kalends of March?" he thought. "The Matrons' Festival!" and a smile flitted over his face. "No, it must be some Greek rite," he decided, "there is something in Hesiod, or is it Aratus?" He got up, and walked to the end of the loggia, which ran round the house. Turning the corner, he saw through the arch at the end, a knot of figures standing together at the bottom of the sloping lawn. He recognized the poet amongst them. The bailiff stood beside him, and some of his labourers, dressed in holiday white. The

little sacrifice was proceeding, beside a green altar of turf. Mæcenas watched them, as the smoke curled upwards, and a murmuring repetition of words reached his ears. He returned to his seat, and presently the ceremony was over, and the poet approached the veranda, holding a basket in his hand. He hummed busily to himself as he crossed the lawn, and the basket was hung up in the portico, and Mæcenas was greeted, and the household was summoned and apologies were repeated. The slaves received interesting orders from a master who always knew what he wanted, and where it was to be found. Mæcenas felt happy. The friendly advice and instruction flowing from the master to his slaves soothed and refreshed him. His friend's household was at once the most antique and the most civilized thing he knew. And so the dinner was prepared. The lamps were lit, the little valley below them filled with gloom, the waterfall tinkled with a sleepier sound, the old pine-tree, which stood sentinel over the farm, grew black against the sky. The irreproachable servant tapped a smoky earthen cask of wine, laid down the



year that Trillus was Consul, and the country dinner so delightful to the great man's palate went forward with a zest. "But why were you sacrificing to-day, you, a bachelor?" His burdens and discomforts were getting dissolved and thawed away, and he asked the question with gusto. Horace was silent for a moment. He looked across the porch and into the night. The waterfall sounded merrily. "Why, this was the day on which my life was spared!" he said. "That is why I asked you to dinner. Come, drink my health, Mæcenas. This was the day my life was saved, from the fall of the tree." Mæcenas looked through his heavy thoughts, and into the poet's face, and there he saw so innocent and quiet a look that it puzzled him far more than any of the complicated expressions he had seen on men's faces. They sat up that night talking till dawn, though as a rule Mæcenas kept early hours for his health's sake. But he felt none the worse for it, but rather refreshed the next day, as the litter swung back down the stony hill-side. With him was a poem newly written on parchment, which he repeated again to himself; the

rhythm of the verse seemed to mingle with the tread of his bearers' feet and to ease the discomforts of the journey.

*Sume, Mæcenas, cyathos amici  
Sospitis centum, et vigiles lucernas  
Perfer in lucem ; procul omnis esto  
Clamor et ira ;  
Neglegens ne qua populus laboret  
Parce privatus nimium cavere ;  
Dona præsentis cape lætus horæ et  
Linque severa.\**

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\* Drink, Mæcenas, pledge in a hundred cups the friend whose life has been preserved to you, and keep the lights alive till daybreak. Let us drink in quiet: no loud disputes or anger. . . . Leave behind your anxieties; heed not whether all be well with the people; be a private gentleman. Away with grim thoughts and take with a glad heart the gifts of the present hour.

## THE POET AND THE ATHEIST

HE was famous and a poet, and being a thinker into the bargain, he had found the facts of his own experience a sufficient, rational and satisfying philosophy of life. Was not his own consciousness a microcosm reflecting the All? Many a will-o'-the-wisp had he followed from youth to manhood, and manhood to middle age, but he had always returned back safe home again, and rested on—Himself.

He was thinking over this foundation truth once more as he stood and surveyed his garden this morning. It was still an early hour. There was a balance and grace in his posture. He was a massive man with noble brow and large liquid eyes. His dress was rough and had seen wear and tear; his hands were those of a skilled mechanic.

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For the poet despised the world. In his youth he had hated it. But reason had never allowed him to spurn it or renounce it altogether. She had always held him in check, and nursed him through his distempers. She permitted him to look like one of his gardeners, to live a life apart from that of his own household, to try fads of vegetarianism and other simplifications of life, to do good to the poor in his village; but not a step farther would she let him go.

And yet the poet had got some way. He had travelled a considerable distance, and reached a state of equilibrium and peace. He found himself towards the close of his middle age, contented and happy. The world, which was growing staler to others, was growing fresher to him. The atmosphere of his garden, the song of the birds, the ruddy brown strength of his gardener, with whom he worked, grew more and more a part of his own life and spirited health. And, best of all, he was learning to feel kindly towards the world. His method was to exact little of anybody, not to hope to hear reason or

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behold sense amongst the common herd, and to give, not expecting return.

The poet had a religion. He believed in the Father of all. From an early age he had been convinced that his consciousness was God-given. "Whence this feeling of life, sanity, and indestructible freshness?" he had said to himself again and again. He regarded people who were of an agnostic and doubtful turn of mind as of inferior calibre. He admitted the influence of temperament in this matter, but flattered himself that at bottom his belief was founded on pure reason. "What do I know?" he would say to himself. "What is there that I really *know*? Myself, my consciousness, my feelings, the facts of life. What else is there to guide me but this?" This consciousness told him that life on the whole was good, and that though evil might be much in evidence, yet authority was with the good; and if the good had authority in his own consciousness, it had authority throughout the universe, from which his consciousness had emanated and appeared. There had often been times, especially of late, when he had found it

possible to see good in all men and all things, and to love them ; and certainly he himself was beloved.

He stood this morning early on the gravel-walk, thinking these things over again in mind, as he had done for years past. It was about seven o'clock. His family and guests were still in bed. "Yes, a man must trust in himself," he thought, "believe in his own consciousness ; only thus could he please his Father." This was his morning prayer. He had an open basket in his hand, and walked down through the May garden, across the wet lawn, to a bed which he was weeding. This was one of his rules—to work for an hour or two in the garden before breakfast. The sky was a deep blue, and preluded a warm day. In every bush and tree the birds were singing, "Come hither, come hither, come hither" ; and he repeated the song over to himself as he weeded. He became aware of the region to which the poet and the birds referred, a quiet easy place, as pure as the air, bright as the light, and as old as time. "Why do not men understand that this *is* the divine ?" he thought to himself,



as the weeds fell into his basket. He soon had the answer. "Because they are not healthy, they won't get up in the morning; they eat too much, and are morbid in their ideas. . . . Only genius can be really good," he thought, "genius is simply health, divine common sense; but one must bear with mankind—nay, one must love them. For is not life good? Is not genius always radiant, beneficent, and humble?"

And so his thoughts ran on as he weeded away in a strong, unperturbed state of self-satisfaction.

He rose to his feet at last and straightened his back, which was beginning to ache most confoundedly. It was getting on for breakfast-time. He went up to the house. Still nobody was down but the servants. He went into the large hall and opened the grand piano. He took out a volume of Beethoven's sonatas. The hall was admirably adapted for sound; the music rang through it firm and true. His hands had not been shaken at all by the weeding. His large eyes shone with brooding health, as melody and harmony filled the apartment.

One by one the family came down to breakfast—his adoring wife, his clever daughters, his humorous son, his daughter's betrothed, the elderly governess, who, having arrived in the distant past, had remained ever afterwards as an integral part of the family life; besides these there were one or two guests. The poet sat at the head of the table, saying little this morning and eating no meat. After breakfast he went into his workshop. He bound his own books. A skilled bookbinding mechanic had arrived the day before to assist him in the execution of some work. His own skill in the art was not perfect, and he was to learn some new tricks of the trade. Entering the workshop, he found the bookbinder already there and at work, bending over his vice. He was a small, elderly man with spectacles and short-clipped moustache. His face and figure looked dried-up and dusty, his complexion was colourless, and his small face deeply lined.

The poet strode into the room and looked thoughtfully at his workman. He liked the look of him—the sharp, quick face of the dry little man in spectacles. In a short time

they were very good friends. The bookbinder, though so grey and dry and parched, was very brisk over his business, and in his talk and movements. He spoke with something of a London accent, and not in a pleasant voice. But the poet shed around him at all times a rich harmonious atmosphere, which spoke to others of receptive depths within. The little bookbinder began to enjoy himself, as they set to work together. In the course of conversation he began to drop a few quotations and evidences of erudition. This did not interest the poet. He had learned by experience that erudition in unexpected quarters is usually a bore. He wanted to find out about the little man's life, about his wife, if he had one, his children, his troubles and struggles. But nothing could be got from him. The dry bookbinder did not melt easily. The poet inquired of his reading at last out of politeness, on the occasion of a not inept quotation from Byron. The bookbinder gave a turn to the handle of his vice. "Yes, sir, I did a lot of reading when I was young—Tennyson, Carlyle, Longfellow, Ruskin—hanything with stuff in it,

sir—none o' your trash for me. But it's all gone from me. I don't suppose I've read a book these fifteen years." He glanced quickly up with his little heavily lined face at the other's massive features. "Yes, it's not that I haven't touched it all, sir—the thoughts of poets and wise men, the beauties of nature and art, and all that; it meant a lot to me at one time. But, to tell you the honest truth, sir, it's ceased to give me any pleasure."

The poet was accustomed to play on people, as he played on the piano, drawing from them the things that were of most importance to them. Presently he got some more out of him.

"I lost my wife, sir, fifteen years ago—wife and first-born went together. I've not done any reading since then."

After a pause the poet said: "But why should this have stopped your reading, if I may ask? You might have found consolation in it."

"Ah, sir, life's too serious for reading," said the workman. "After my wife's death I read a lot of scientific works published by

the Rationalist Press — Clodd, Herbert Spencer, 'Aeckel's "Riddle of the Universe"; I wanted to find out things."

"That's very interesting," said the poet.

"And you see, sir, the scientists tell us that matter is energy, and energy is electrons moving in hether. This table 'erc is electrons, not what it seems," knocking it with the handle of his tool, "it's a stream of energy moving with lightning speed. There you are you see, sir—" he broke off suddenly, with an intense searching gaze at the blade of his chisel.

"And did you prosecute these studies far?" said the poet.

The little man shook his head. "After that I gave up reading. Science hupsets everything. My mind's all confused—I don't believe in anything."

The poet was silent for a moment, as he sharpened a tool on the oil-stone. Then he looked up with a smile:

"Let us begin at the beginning," he said. "You don't believe in the Bible—'In the beginning God——'?"

"No, sir, I do not," said the bookbinder.

"It came 'ome to me after my bereavement. I said—with 'Uxley—if Almighty, not good ; if good, not Almighty. I am a hatheist, sir."

A profoundly meditative look came over the poet's face. He thought in silence and then turned to his companion. His large, liquid eyes were beautiful. "And don't you believe in good ? Can't you feel the wonders of creation, the kindness of the human heart, the grandeur of suffering and toil and endurance ? "

"It's not that I 'aven't touched all that, sir," said the little man, feeling the edge of his chisel, "but I don't believe in feelings—I scarcely think my own mind is anything at all."

They worked on again in silence.

"Do you think it can be right to think of life as you do ? " said the poet at last, "to make a mere nothing of it ? "

The bookbinder looked up inquiringly : "It don't make any difference what I think, sir," he said, and bent his bloodless face over his task again.

"You called yourself an atheist just now,"



said the poet, "but perhaps you meant something different—an atheist and an agnostic are not quite the same."

"I am more than a hagnostic, sir," said the workman with a sudden glance. "It came to me as my wife lay there in agony, and the doctor and all the neighbours expecting 'er death. I said to myself—it came to me clear as daylight—'There's no reason nor truth nor good in this.' And I said to myself: 'E is not good. I've seen it now with my own eyes.' That's knowledge, sir—so I call myself a hatheist." He shook some scraps of leather together in his lap.

The poet looked out of the window and back again at the workman. Never had he seen such an odd, dry, dusty little atheist. He was a very good workman. All his movements were quick, neat, and clean. He never made a mistake, and never faltered.

They worked away, but the poet got no further in intercourse with his companion. It did indeed seem that apart from his work, life was nothing to him, an emptiness out of which further conversation, at any rate, could not at present be evolved. Yet there

was a tense concentration on his face which seemed to suggest something more than the work on which he was engaged. By luncheon-time the poet was very hungry, not so much from the prolonged spell of work, as from a sensation of spiritual emptiness produced by his proximity to the bookbinder. He gave out nothing, he asked for nothing—he only worked, quickly, smoothly, easily.

The poet passed through many moods in the course of the morning. At one time he felt irritated, at another time a broad smile rippled across him. He attempted a few more arguments and quiet, kind, and wise sentences on higher subjects. The little man nodded in a peculiar way at any such remarks. The nod meant: "You may think that, but it's nothing to me." And the other knew that this was its intention.

The poet ate and drank rather more than was his wont that day. He laughed rather more, and the family and guests rejoiced. The sun shone in on the luncheon-table. He demonstrated visibly the goodness and joyfulness of life. The tense puckered face of the little atheist kept rising up before his

mind as he had seen it, in the grey dusty atmosphere of the morning's work. He turned from this picture to the happy glowing faces around him. The talk turned to literature and art. His daughter's betrothed was an accomplished man. The poet discoursed and questioned, meditated, laughed, argued. He was both author and critic by profession.

After lunch he sat down to his writing. He was writing a philosophical work, which he called "Art and the Ego." It was a work he scarcely hoped to finish to his satisfaction. He was doubtful if he should ever publish it, but it gave him pleasure to work at it. He had worked at it for years and it had grown; he had recast it, modified it, altered it. He relieved these critical studies by producing poetical creations of his own. When the inspiration was on him, his theory of art became momentarily clear, and he was always surprised at the simplicity of the solution. But when he tried to appropriate these results to his habitual consciousness, and garner the fruits into his philosophy, it was not so simple.

Whilst he was thus at work, he was told

that the bookbinder wished to see him. The little man came into his study and stood before him, with one side of his apron pinned up. He spoke in his quick and matter-of-fact, slightly unpleasant tone, and explained that one of his tools needed soldering. The work could not be accomplished as it ought without this tool. He might perhaps make a shift to do without it, but he liked things to be perfect, so far as his work went. The poet smiled and told him he could get it mended at the neighbouring town, which was two miles distant, and the bookbinder obtained leave to walk over there at once.

When he had done his writing, the poet went out for a ride, without taking tea. His place was surrounded by big woods and forest country. He rode through the woods at a foot-pace, climbing gently upwards, and reached a piece of open forest-land. Still he rode at a foot-pace. His figure on horseback was commanding. Though he was lost in thought, yet his shoulders were scarcely bowed, and his forehead scarcely bent. "That little man doesn't believe in God," he repeated often to himself, trying to docket this

character, and place it in its right pigeon-hole. He entered the woods again, and looked at the green distances, at the soft brown bracken of last year, with the new green shoots springing up in the midst of it. Then he came out into the open forest again, still at a foot-pace and thinking. The heather was dark and shadowy. Some large storm-clouds had arisen charged with rain, which had not yet begun to fall. It was such a day as the poet loved. He rode on always, rising slightly. He was making for the summit of a hill, from which a landscape of the whole countryside could be seen. The face of the bookbinder was printed on his mind with extraordinary clearness—its dusty earnest look, the tense lines, the utter absence of all human sensuality. On he rode and reached the summit. The storm had grown. In the distance lightning was playing in the clouds. Nature was gathering herself together for tumult. The poet smiled with delight, as the first roll of thunder reached his ears. If there was a thing he loved, it was a thunder-storm, and he prophesied a big one, as he looked across the plain. The blue

clouds were towering up in gigantic masses, and more than one storm seemed to be converging on the same spot. He saw no less than three clouds, hanging at different points over the darkened plain, and flickering now and then with lightning. They were borne onwards towards him, slowly, with thunders and threatenings, but all the air was still. The poet remained on the summit a long time watching them, and a mysterious joy smouldered in his eye. Presently a wind swept by which increased violently, and in a few minutes a gale was blowing. Then came the rain in large flying drops. These were the precursors of the storm, which continued to advance majestically. But the poet could not wait for it to break ; it was getting late and he had to get back. It caught him before he was half-way home, as he rode down through the woods. The trees roared and shook, the rain fell in a deluge, and the thunder bellowed close at hand. At the end of the woods he emerged into the high road. Opposite him another road descended, and he saw a small figure walking quickly down it towards him. They met at the cross-roads,



by a bridge. It was the bookbinder with a small handbag in his hand. He was returning from the neighbouring town with his precious weapon mended. They could hardly hear one another speak, the thunder and wind were so loud; the surface of the road was whipped up by the rain.

“A tremendous storm,” the poet shouted, his face glowing with excitement. The little man looked up at him on his horse, and a faint smile flickered for an instant over his face. They walked on side by side, through the storm, the poet at a foot-pace on his horse, the bookbinder walking beside him, bag in hand.

Turning a corner of the road, a blast of wind hit them. The open plain lay below them on the right. Then came an explosion it seemed of the very air they breathed, and a blinding flash of light barred the road in front. The poet's spirits rose higher and higher. He looked round in the dark woods and lifted his face to the driving rain.

“Can you deny the majesty of a storm like this?” he said at last to his companion. “Lift up your eyes and see the glory and

power of Nature." A flash of lightning revealed the plain below them, the trees flourishing signals of distress, dark expanses of light and shade, and for an instant a wind-mill and houses on a distant ridge. "What is it to me?" said the bookbinder. "What care I for it?"

They both stopped by the wall of the road. "What care I for it?" repeated the little man. "Why should I acknowledge it to be anything? Cursed, senseless power sending forth good and evil." A flash of lightning lit up his face, and the poet saw that the tears had started into his eyes. As soon as he had spoken, he hurried on along the road in front. But the poet was not disturbed by his words. His spirits rose the higher. He rode on at a foot-pace behind the little workman. He became more and more intoxicated with the splendour of the storm. It seemed to him as if his own brow were girt with thunder-clouds, and the lightning were wielded by himself. He kept his eyes on the figure of the bookbinder, as he walked on ahead. Suddenly a ribbon of blue flame fell between them. A dead shock smote him

on the forehead, and he fell to the earth. He was up again in an instant. The book-binder lay on the road, his figure limp and scattered. The poet ran to him and raised him. There were no signs of injury but he was unconscious. The poet gathered him in his arms; he seemed light as a feather. He carried him rapidly towards the house.

"A dreadful catastrophe," he said to himself. "A terrible accident." He repeated the words again and again. He could not realize what had happened. He did not know for certain if the man were dead. He looked as he had looked in life, but he was unconscious.

He reached the drive leading up to his house through the park. The wind was crashing in the elms overhead. He had let go of his horse, and it now came galloping past him up the avenue. Before he reached the house, a stableman met him. He sent this man for the doctor, reached the door, rang the bell violently and went in. He carried the burden up the oak staircase and into his own bedroom, and laid him on his bed.

The man was breathing still, but unconscious, as if asleep. He looked just as before the accident, dry and dusty, small and pale. The doctor came and they got him into bed. The nurse too arrived from the village. She quickly arranged the poet's bedroom as a sick-room and put everything in order.

The poet went to and fro between the sick-room and his own study. The doctor had said the man's life was hanging by a thread. The poet hoped fervently that he might recover consciousness. He wanted to have more communication with him. He prayed for this, and then thought it strange that he should do so unreasonable a thing. They wanted to make him a bed in another room, but he said he would sit up. At about two in the morning, he went up to the sick-room and told the nurse to go and lie down. His bedroom was a large room, well furnished with books and pictures. He had so arranged his bed that he could see out of the window from where he lay. Something prompted him to go to the window and draw back the curtain. The

storm had ceased. The moon was shining on the drive, the landscape was almost as visible as if it were day, and he could see the top of the hill where he had been that day. The bookbinder's face was illumined from the window. There was the same tense, concentrated expression on it. They had tied his head in bandages. He breathed heavily, and his lips kept moving, and he stirred now and then.

Suddenly he raised himself slightly, and put an arm out of the bed. He opened his eyes and fixed them on the window. Then he began to talk incoherently. The poet sat down beside him and held his hand in his. For a long time he sat there, holding his hand, whilst the man talked half in a whisper.

After a time the poet became aware that the bookbinder was trying to say something to him. He could not tell how he knew this, but he felt it. He saw that his eyes were fixed on the window.

"What is it that you see?" he said.

The answer came distinctly: "The hill . . . in the moonlight. . . ."

The poet had longed for one word of

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communication. He still felt that the man wanted to tell him something. He was looking at the window and there was still the same expression of tense thought in his face.

"What is it that you want to tell me?" he said, and bent close down to him to catch the answer.

Again the words came distinctly :

"It's . . . up . . . side . . . down. . . ."

Those were the last words the poet got from the bookbinder. He never regained consciousness and died two days later from the stroke of the lightning.

The funeral took place in the parish, as the bookbinder had no relatives; the poet attended it, and afterwards, as the evening was fine, he went out and weeded his garden. He believed in the dignity and necessity of human ceremonies, especially Christian ceremonies, as teaching men to bow to God's will, and accept the decrees of fate, with a measured and solemn grace. But this funeral had been a failure as far as his own feelings were concerned; and he was very glad to get back to his garden again. He weeded



steadily in the gloaming, but peace would not come to him. The birds sang "Come hither, come hither, come hither," again, but this time he knitted his brows almost petulantly. "Whither? whither? whither?" he said. At last he straightened his back painfully and stood for a considerable time motionless. Then he took up his basket and went into the house. He went into his study, and took out his manuscript. He turned the pages listlessly, frowning at it.

"Perhaps it's we who—" he said suddenly, and fell into a brown study before the sentence was finished. Then he shrugged his shoulders, took up his pen, and began to write.

## PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN

1899

A NUMBER of people were waiting in the station, at a small manufacturing town, for the 9.15 to Manchester. All were on business bent, and looked somewhat depressed. In a siding at the end of the platform, a groom and a porter were engaged in boxing two horses. A smart brougham drove up, and a gentleman came into the booking-hall with top-boots and spurs showing under a long overcoat, wearing a hunting-stock and top-hat, and a crop in his hand with a leather thong. He went to the booking office, pulled off one of his gloves, and purchased a first-class ticket to Rugely Hampton. This was Mr. Harry Jamieson, M.P. for the county, a youngish-looking man of thirty-five. The station-master came out of his office.

"The 9.15 is all right for Rugely Hampton?" said Mr. Jamieson.

"Yes, sir, we are stopping the train

specially, and your box will be slipped. You are the only one this morning, I think, sir."

Mr. Jamieson went on to the platform and looked at the bookstall. A small party of school-children, who were being taken by a teacher to the Missionary exhibition at Manchester, eyed his boots and spurs from a distance, and whispered to one another. Mr. Jamieson walked to the edge of the platform, and looked up at the soft grey clouds.

"It's a perfect day," he said to himself. He strolled up the platform towards his horse-box. An old withered-looking clergyman stepped briskly up to him.

"Ah, Mr. Jamieson, out again, I see. I hope you had good sport yesterday. I was so sorry to hear of Colonel Trotter's accident. By the way, we are having a little meeting in the schools on Friday week. One of the missionary delegates is coming to talk to us. Now could you fill the chair on that evening, and speak a few words on the subject?"

Mr. Jamieson had a strong sense of responsibility; it was due to that and that alone that he had come to sit for the county. The

date and hour were inconvenient but he finally assented.

"It is certainly important," he said, "that foreign missions should not be neglected."

At this moment a groom in livery appeared, and handed Mr. Jamieson a flask and a silver sandwich-case.

As he was retiring Mr. Jamieson called him back.

"Don't forget," he said, "to fetch those books for Mrs. Jamieson from the library. And now I think of it, perhaps you had better call at Mason's, and take the fish with you."

"The cart will be going over in the afternoon to fetch Miss Edith's bicycle," said the groom with a frigid countenance. Nothing could get itself arranged properly. The train carried him off before the difficulties had been solved.

Mr. Jamieson sat down carefully to avoid disturbing the bandana apron under his overcoat, which protected his freshly whitened leathers. Opposite him was a gentleman in a frock-coat, reading the *Daily News*. Mr. Jamieson pulled from his pocket two papers,

one the local newspaper, the other a copy of the new Education Bill which had lately been introduced in Parliament. He opened the former and soon found an account of the run which he had enjoyed the day before. He read it through twice, glanced over the rest of the sheet, and then took up the Education Bill and endeavoured to concentrate his mind upon it. Yesterday's run, however, had obliterated other thoughts. His mind dwelt especially on a certain point in it where they had changed foxes, omitted in the account he had just read. He had never been so much put out in his life. It was at the bottom of a small wooded dingle. He could see the place distinctly. Hounds were working up it all by themselves ; he could see again their large white bodies among the dry stems of the trees, hunting carefully, almost thoughtfully. Not a doubt of it, the fox was ahead of them. All no good. Loud yells from right back ; a huntsman without an idea where his hounds are or what they are doing, vehemently blows his horn ; a young whip comes down through the wood, rating the pack loudly, and sends them flying back

to be laid on a brand new fox.—Dreadful, disgusting.

“Excuse me, sir,” said the gentleman opposite, “I see you have there the new Education Bill. May I ask your opinion of it? It is a most important measure.”

Jamieson answered politely: “Well, I think it is as good a Bill as could be expected, under the very difficult circumstances.”

“Oh!” said the gentleman, his tone implying a slight moral censure. “Then you are satisfied with its fairness?” A quiver of self-control passed over his face. “Do you call it fair”—the self-control suddenly vanished—“that I, a Free Churchman, should pay to have my children crammed with Romish doctrine? Perhaps you are not aware, sir, what the Anglican Church is coming to?” he went on. “Perhaps you are not aware that there are no less than one thousand four hundred and three clergymen of the Established Church, who daily break the law of the land, and their own most solemn ordination vows. Perhaps you are unaware, sir, that there are Jesuits at this very day, holding benefices in the Church



of England." He looked bitterly at Jamieson.

"Well," he said, "what's that to do with the new Bill?"

"It's this to do with it, sir. The sacerdotalists mean to capture the education of the country. Our children are to be taught Romanizing mummary—yes, sir, Popish mummary—that's what they're after. But the Free Churches are waking up, sir. We are realizing that there is a big fight before us, a fight for the Bible. The old spirit of English Nonconformity is alive again. Why, sir, we *wanted* something of this kind. We were growing indifferent; the old spirit was slumbering; but we are awaking to the fact that we have once more to fight for the liberty for which our fathers suffered. I am myself delegated to attend a large meeting this afternoon in Manchester. It will make an impression, that meeting. We have several of the most influential citizens on the platform."

Jamieson looked out of the window. It was beginning to rain, though the horizon was silvery bright. A man on horseback in

a red coat could be seen jogging along the road past a big wood. They were getting near Rugely Hampton.

"Well, it'll be passed into law, anyway," he said casually, putting his pipe away. "There seems little doubt of that."

"Yes, sir, you may tyrannize over us for a time with your majority, but you cannot bind the spirit of freedom. We are too *many* for that. I utter a menace, sir, which people who think with you, would do well to give ear to."

He returned quite suddenly to his *Daily News*, and spoke not another word.

Jamieson looked up quickly but no more was said.

Presently the train was stopped for him at Rugely Hampton and he got out.

There were several hunting men on the platform, making a commotion over their arrangements. They had just come in by the special from Manchester. Jamieson, who had hunted in the country since boyhood, did not know any of them, though several of their faces were familiar. His horses were got out of the train, and he mounted outside

the station, and went off down the road. It had stopped raining, and a gleam of sun had come out. Everything about his person shone glossy and bright—his silk hat, white stock, glowing red coat, white breeches, shiny boots, the bit and chain, his mare's well-groomed coat, her hoofs blacked and polished. Beyond him, on the same road, were an old gentleman with white hair, also in scarlet, and two ladies, jogging along; farther on, two more gentlemen, in black frock-coats and white leathers; beyond them, yet another party. All presented the same brilliant and glossy appearance.

Rugely Hampton was a straggling manufacturing place, with works and chimneys and sooty-looking fields, enclosed by timber and wire. A number of dirty men were walking on the black paths, or standing about, with children playing round them outside the houses. The sight of them, as Jamieson passed by, bored him. He passed a dingy little hall, where a year or two before he had addressed a meeting of them and answered questions from a platform decorated with palms and Union Jacks. He was

their representative, but not one of them recognized him as he rode by. He came opposite a large group of them by a public-house at the cross-roads, talking and jesting with one another in rather an uppish way.

At this point he was joined by a young man he knew, riding a thoroughbred, one of fifteen which he possessed, being of good breeding extraction—a fair man with a big jaw, an immensely long back, and a knee and boot as sharp and clear-cut as a geometrical instrument.

“There seem a lot of the men about,” Jamieson remarked to him. “Is anything up to-day?”

“Yes, they’re Brown’s men,” replied the young man, “ungrateful brutes—he’s always building them institutes and reading-rooms, and starting football clubs for them. *They* don’t care—they’re on strike now—came out to-day—for some extra halfpenny or other. I don’t know what the dispute is exactly. The country’s going to the dogs.”

They passed on their way, ambling and jogging towards the meet. They soon got clear of the chimneys, but a slight stain of

black still tinged the trunks and branches of the trees, the hedges, the surface of the road, and the woolly bodies of the sheep in the fields. Neither of them was conscious of this; they had got used to it.

As they drew near the meet, the cross-roads and lanes brought a continual increase of horsemen and horsewomen, of smart rapid conveyances, of grooms riding and leading horses, saddled or side-saddled.

Outside a public-house, farther on, the road was thronged with horses and riders. Hunting men, not all of them in the best of temper, were going in and out of the inn and of the yard, which was also full of horses. Jamieson threaded his way through a crowded lane beyond. Hence an open gate led into a field. This too was full of riders. Everywhere shone the coats of beautiful horses, bright chestnuts, bays, browns, and blacks, here and there a conspicuous grey. Everywhere were the same shining top-hats, snowy leathers, red and black coats, gleaming bits and stirrup-irons. In front of Jamieson, going through the gate, was a lady in a dark grey riding-habit with a velvet collar and

elegant waist, whom he recognized. He came up alongside, and bade her good morning. She was not particularly good-looking. The girl beyond her was exceedingly handsome; she wore a black-blue habit; her chestnut hair was plaited in small plaits, and rolled tightly rather low on the neck. She rode a bright chestnut with a skin of fire.

"Extraordinary thing—that girl," said Miss Sandars, the lady by his side. "She looks twenty-eight and more, and she's only nineteen."

"She's not much of a goer," observed Jamieson, "usually sticks to papa and his cob, when hounds are running."

He went forward and took off his hat, as he passed her. She gave him a beautiful smile. An oldish man with a brown, Jewish-looking face, and grizzled, almost white, whiskers, rode up to them.

"I say, Jamieson," he said in an easy young man's tone, without any preliminaries, "I hear your constituents are misbehaving again. All Brown's men are on strike this morning. What's the use of being a Member of Parliament, if you can't



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arrange these little things—eh, Miss Crossways ? ”

He had the figure of a young man, and rode a fidgety thoroughbred, which bobbed him up and down as he spoke.

“ I *know*, ” said the girl, smoothing the silky shoulder of her horse, “ he’s a lazy man ; he was out yesterday, and he’s out again to-day. When he does all his important duties I don’t know. ”

Mr. Kaschner laughed, showing a row of beauties.

Jamieson laughed too. He had endured a good deal of this kind of thing since he had first surprised people by standing for the county. But he disliked the chaff, for some reason which he had never taken the trouble to think about.

“ Well, isn’t this one of them ? Encouraging a national sport, good for trade, and all that. Always buy my straw and oats from local farmers—that’s all right, isn’t it ? ”

“ Ah, well, he knows part of his business at any rate, don’t he, Miss Crossways ? What a beautiful forty minutes we had yesterday afternoon. ”

"Yes, if we hadn't changed foxes in the middle of it," said Jamieson sharply.

"Oh, you thought that, did you? You mean at the spinney. Well, I thought Brown did quite right to lift them back on to that holler. They were doing no good."

Jamieson moved off, knowing it was useless to argue with an ignorant man. He caught the eye of a thick-set old gentleman, with a short wiry grey beard, clean-shaven upper lip, and a diminutive leg, which looked rock-like against the saddle, as though no power on earth could ever move it. His horse was standing by the fence, next to the road. He beckoned Jamieson to him with an almost imperceptible nod and a mysterious twinkle of the eye.

"Do look at St. Aubyn, my dear fellow," he said in an undertone as Jamieson came up alongside.

"Where?"

"In the wagonette there with his mummy."

Jamieson looked into the road, and saw a young man who was evidently not going to hunt, in a bowler hat, sitting under a rug in the wagonette. He was talking to ladies

opposite him, and looked extremely miserable. A few wisps of hair stuck out over the top of his greatcoat collar, and a yellow-paper book and paper-knife rested on the seat of the carriage. Jamieson laughed.

“But we’re behind the times, Colonel, to be still laughing at St. Aubyn,” he said. “He’s a coming man. They think a lot of him at Oxford. Made him a Fellow of his college. He runs the Union—awfully clever chap.”

“O Christopher! I know all about that,” said the Colonel. “And we all know he’s not a bad fellow into the bargain. His father was one of the finest sportsmen in the county; but his mummy was always gone on literary men and books and all that; she wrecked him.”

At this moment, the Master passed them, with big bent shoulders, a glowing purple face, small dyed imperial, and heavy supercilious lines about his eyes and mouth. He nodded to Jamieson and the Colonel.

“I think we might be moving off now,” he said.

“I think we might have been moving off

half an hour ago," grumbled the Colonel to his neighbour.

The whole party of three hundred horsemen and more began to move off. The huntsman's voice was heard in front. They squashed through a gateway at the far end of the field and proceeded for a quarter of a mile along a cinder-path at the foot of a high railway embankment, then turned off to the covert side. Cheering sounds from the huntsman and the cracking of whips announced that hounds were being put in. The whole field were gathered at the same end, still talking and laughing, to all appearance paying no attention to what was going forward, their horses restless and reaching at the bit. A stranger who saw them would never have gathered that the sport had commenced, and that hounds were drawing for a fox. The hounds had not been five minutes in covert, when a whimper was heard.

"A fox!" said everybody.

Then followed a series of distant screams from a single hound, echoing through the wood.

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“That’s all right ! That’s right enough !” said every one, and all began to fidget forward.

“Wait a bit, please, wait a bit,” said the Master, holding up his hand.

At last, from the farthest end of the covert came several small and distant “Hallos !” one after the other, long-drawn and steadily sustained.

“Wait a bit, wait a bit, please,” still said the Master.

The wood was full of sounds, the huntsman’s horn, cracking whips, loud cries.

“Now you can go !” said the Master, and he closed his legs on his horse’s sides.

The whole field thundered down the side of the wood in one wild rush. Jamieson was on the extreme left, next the ditch and hedge which enclosed the covert. A stranger on his right gave him no room, and he galloped along the very edge of the ditch.

“We shall all be killed,” he groaned to himself without swearing at his neighbour ; the squash was so bad and the rush so wild, that no one could be blamed.

Having swept round to the end of the covert, they found that two-thirds of the

pack were still inside. Several gentlemen, with difficulty restraining their steeds, pranced round and round, giving vent to piercing "Hallos," whilst the huntsman blew his horn, as if he were trying to burst himself or the instrument. By twos and threes the hounds came screaming out and dashed down the line. Once more the Master stuck his heels into his horse, and away they all went again into the open. Hounds were racing across a huge flat meadow, covered with rough tufted grass; all round were more meadows of the kind, separated by small easy fences, full of gaps. Small plantations were dotted here and there. The galloping field spread out over these meadows. Hounds ran a complete circle and back again to a distant part of the same covert. Jamieson pulled up and looked round.

"Did you ever see such a ridiculous sight in your life?" he sneered bitterly to a young man who was prancing at the edge of the plantation.

The whole country for half a mile round was covered with people galloping and jumping fences, in every possible direction, whilst



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every gap was choked with a little knot of strugglers. Gradually they all arrived at the edge of the covert again, from which hounds had not yet emerged. Next minute, hounds were off again and the same process was repeated. Scent was good, but the fox went round and round, like a cub. The field were spread about everywhere. More than once the pack were seen tearing right through the middle of a heavy body of cavalry. The confusion was absurd.

This sort of thing went on for most of the morning. At last, after they had waited outside a large covert for a good half-hour, "Who-op" resounded from the interior.

"Got him!" said every one, and the huntsman came out holding a small muddy-looking object in his hand.

Thus ended the morning's sport. Every one was very contemptuous. Flasks, sandwiches, cigars came out, as the fox was broken up. The sky was lowering but the rain kept off.

In the afternoon they moved off to a gorse-covert a mile or two away, trotting thither in a procession—first the pack and the hunt

servants ; then the Master, his elbows sticking out and his right hand jogging up and down in the air, hat tilted slightly backwards, with a cigar between his teeth ; then the rank and file bobbing and ambling along. They passed through two villages, causing a commotion amongst the working people and the children.

Arrived at the gorse, hounds were quickly put in. The greater part of the field continued talking as before.

"The fact is," Jamieson said to himself, "most of them don't *want* to get a good start. What they come out for, Heaven only knows." He posted himself at one corner and waited.

The ground fell away gradually for a mile or more in front of him ; at the bottom was a small brook ; beyond this the land rose again rather more steeply ; the fields were all of grass and quite small. Close by him were several more people, all of whom looked like business. On his right was the young brewer, his companion of the morning, on thoroughbred number two. Next to him was a quiet-looking soldier with freckles and a moustache

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of which the lower part and the ends seemed to have been cut away with a pair of scissors for convenience' sake. He rode a big grey. Not far off was the Colonel, talking to a haughty man with a thin Roman nose, heavy eyelids, and a disgusted look about his under lip. He carried a cutting-whip instead of a crop, and was sitting in the middle of a long Irish-looking mare. Farther on was a magnificent chestnut, whose rider kept tilting his hat forward on to his nose and then on to the back of his head; he had a big tawny moustache, and a bar of muscle across his jaw went in and out. A very slim lady with dark blue eyes, a long nose with wide curved nostril, and a flush of colour on either cheekbone, was behind Jamieson on a big brown horse. She was talking to a man on a clean-bred, slightly ewe-necked bay mare, wearing a shallow bowler hat and grey riding suit, quite young, with a hard dashing look about his face. All these meant going. And they had not long to wait.

A small brown animal was seen running away across the opposite slope. Soon afterwards the huntsman appeared, galloping and

blowing his horn with a few hounds at his horse's heels.

Simultaneously all the riders bent forward ; their horses jumped off together and raced down the slope. There was a fair-sized fence half-way down. As Jamieson's mare flew it, he could feel the balance of her body under him adjusting itself to the curve of her flight, as she dropped on the far side : she landed with both forelegs stiff in front of her but they scarcely touched the ground before they were half across the next field. On his left and a little behind were the lady and the young man ; on his right the Colonel, the brewer, the long Irish mare, the chestnut and the big grey. Some thirty or forty people followed behind. At the bottom was a small brook with steep banks. Jamieson, the lady on his left, and the rest of the first lot all went over it easily. The thirty or forty horsemen behind pulled up, and took it one by one at the same place till somebody tumbled in, when they galloped off in search of another exit. The hounds were streaming diagonally up the opposite slope. The riders over the brook were a little beforehand, and pulled

up. The Irish mare wheeled round and hopped about shaking her head ; the chestnut reared under a heavy pull ; the big grey got his quarters under him, and kept bobbing forward. None of the riders appeared conscious of the impatience of their steeds.

" Making for Bolton Gorse, I think," said the quiet man on the grey.

" Yes, or it might be the coverts at Ardley," said the man on the chestnut.

" Now then, boys," said the Colonel, as the hounds drew level ; and the horses again shot away, pricking their ears at the pack, as they galloped along on its right rear.

There followed a steeplechase. The Colonel was just ahead ; four others spread out to the right of him, about level. Each chose his own place in the fence at the end of the field. The Colonel popped over it first, then the others almost abreast. They all turned their heads towards the pack as soon as they landed. Jamieson caught a glimpse of the hounds racing along in a string, ahead and to the left of them, on the other side of a tall scanty hedge which ran parallel to them. Next moment, he was flying at a bit of

timber. He turned his head again. They were swinging off to the left. He saw the Colonel pulling his horse round after them. On the Colonel's right galloped the chestnut, his rider standing in his stirrups with both hands down over his horse's withers. His head was turned towards hounds, but he was keeping straight on. The Colonel was after the hounds through a hedge on the left; he held his right arm up across his face. Jamieson kept straight on—it was too late to turn. His mare shot over a ditch full of brambles; then he pulled her round, and swept through the high hedge on the left. The Colonel had a good lead; the others were galloping in echelon to the right of him, and Jamieson found himself last. The pack were inclining down a slight slope. Away on the left of them a number of pink coats galloping were now in view.

Close in his rear the fields were shaken by a thundering crowd of gallopers. Next moment he was over a big fence. There was a drop on the far side, and his body went swinging comfortably back as they dropped through the air; his mare seemed to be made



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of whalebone. Hounds kept swinging to the left, and Jamieson was getting behindhand. Numbers of men were by this time level with him, pelting forward, their horses' legs smiting the field under them with a rapid circular motion. Everything now seemed to go wrong. He passed over an eminence and saw in the distance the Colonel right in front, popping in and out of a lane, as if he were on a rocking-horse. Before Jamieson could reach the lane, a body of cavalry came charging up it and his place in the hunt was instantly lost. Fresh gallopers kept appearing round a corner of the lane where a cross-road entered, their horses gripping the surface of the road, and jerking round with short spasmodic efforts. Jamieson's way was still barred and he began to be filled with rage and disgust. He had to creep into the lane and join the ruck. He was now clattering through a large farmstead with thirty or forty others, like a herd of cattle. Out in the open again people's backs and flying coat-tails were all he could see. He rode angrily, swearing to himself. At many of the gaps little strings of people were pausing

and waiting their turn. Jamieson smashed through the fences on his own line, trying to make up for lost ground. He thought of the Colonel and the others who were still in the first flight, accomplishing what they came out for. A grand gallop was in progress, but it was only pain to himself. He passed over a bit of rising ground, and had a glimpse of small red coats right ahead in the distance. He galloped on, simmering internally. The going was heavy. He rode at a bar of timber next to a tree with a green trunk; the turf before him was stamped deeply with the marks of people who had gone over before. His mare rapped the timber heavily, and disturbed her balance. She pecked violently on landing but recovered and was off again, charged down a slope and shot through a big black fence. A terrific drop revealed itself to Jamieson's eyes, as he came over. He was riding carelessly. The upper part of his body sailed forward, and he landed with an awful bump on the front of the saddle, toppling forward; his cheek touched his horse's mane.

"Well, we seem to be all right," he thought,

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but before he could say it, his mare had collapsed under him and they rolled away head over heels into the field. Jamieson felt himself to be falling clear, as he turned a rapid somersault ; but next moment came a jerk, and all the breath and consciousness was knocked out of him. . . .

He opened his eyes and saw silent green grass all round, and roots sticking out of the bank above him.

He raised himself up. A second horseman was trotting up, leading his mare.

“ Hope you’re not hurt, sir ? ”

“ Oh, no, I’m all right,” said Jamieson, standing up. He felt horribly ill, and everything was swimming. “ Must have got mixed up in the reins—most extraordinary thing,” he said, taking hold of his mare. “ I’m right enough now ; rather a nasty jar, that’s all. Don’t wait.”

He gave half a crown to the man, who trotted off.

“ I can’t go on,” thought Jamieson to himself, “ I’m feeling too bad.”

He gathered up the reins, one of which was broken, and pulled himself into the saddle, and walked off. He soon found a lane which would take him into the main road for Rugely Hampton. He was feeling very much dazed and unutterably wretched. He went along slowly at a foot-pace. His ears were singing, and at times he seemed hardly to know where he was or what he was doing. His right thigh felt stiff. He went slowly on, revolving in mind his own wretchedness.

As his body began to settle down after the shock, he felt mentally depressed. He began to think about things, but a settled gloom pervaded everything. A dumb pain entered his mind. Nowhere was any pleasure, nowhere a ray of hope. What a farce had been all the day's proceedings! Where was any pleasure in it, any profit? "Hunting," he said to himself, "I used to adore it—but I believe I hate it. Where have the hounds been all day? I've hardly seen them; and what have all these people been doing? They don't understand what they are about—they don't know what hunting *is*—they talk nonsense about it and follow the fashion, that

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is all. And what *is* it after all? What's the point? What are we here for? Is there any meaning in anything?"

A feeling of intense gloom entered his mind, but at this moment he reached the main road and an inn. Here he tried to strengthen himself with some whisky, and drank a cup of tea. But as soon as he was in the saddle again, the same distressing questions and feelings assailed him.

As he rode home at a foot-pace, his mind became full of a confused chaos, singing ears and beating ear-drums, mixed with miserable thoughts. He was running over all the events of the day, and trying to find a little light somewhere. He tried to recall the pleasure of the chase, tried to think of the hounds, see them in his mind's eye, and recall the peculiar delight that they had been wont to give him. But it was of no use. He seemed to be only galloping after them in vain, with a pain in his head. Snatches of the day's events and conversations kept passing through his mind. Now the air seemed full of gallopers, and he himself was galloping, always galloping—always seeking, never finding. Fragments of

words sounded in the air, and he opened his own lips suddenly with a question in them. He started and shook himself up in the saddle. He perceived that his thoughts had become feverish from the shock. "Well, I must keep hold of myself and reality," he thought and he turned his mind with a blank numbness upon the surrounding objects. "Why had hunting become so dreary and exasperating a thing? What was wrong with life? Why all this sham sport and weariness?" Gallop, gallop, gallop—he was off pursuing something again, thwarted by other gallopers in all directions. Now the face of his groom loomed up through the crowd, asking him polite questions which had no answer. "There is but one question," he said to himself as he galloped on, "I must get out of this mess and maze; I must get to hounds." Now there were two men holding on to his knees as he galloped. They fought with one another across his saddle-bow, and he recognized the Nonconformist and the Vicar. He tried to cast them off, but they grappled with him, and together they galloped like a juggernaut through



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crowds of children. The children blocked his way in all directions, but he galloped on regardless of their cries. At last he caught sight of a hound, but it was only a stray one, lost like himself. Now he was in a field full of horsemen, galloping furiously up and down, dodging and dashing hither and thither, and asking questions. Showers of chaff were hurled at him. Again he caught sight of a hound, and was off after it. He must get to the hounds ; he had a question to ask them. It was on his lips all the time. He was racing now with other horsemen ; he saw the Colonel with his immovable leg, the young brewer, the Irish mare with the cutting-whip lashing its sides, the tawny moustaches on the chestnut. They raced a terrible race. The ditches yawned black and deep below them, filled with water and slime. One by one his companions fell, horse and rider scattered in mid-air and crashing to earth. Now they were all gone, but Jamieson was still swept on by an irresistible force. At last the pace slackened. He saw a lame hound, covered with soot, crawling ahead of him. He followed it at a foot-pace, and emerged on to

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a plain of ashes. Far and near were countless chimneys, belching forth smoke. The air was filled with the roar of machinery. Jamieson paused and scanned the horizon in vain for the hounds. As he looked, he saw millions of men, pale, dirty, ragged. They came swarming towards him. They surrounded him on all sides and appeared to be asking for employment. Jamieson tried to make them a political speech ; he tried in vain to recall his party's programme. All he could say was : "Where are the hounds ? Have you seen the hounds ? Have you seen the hounds ? . . ." How stupid . . . it is all a dream, all a dream. He repeated these words to himself, and the dark scene and the roaring began to fade away. All a dream . . . all a dream . . . the words gave him a peculiar satisfaction.

"It is all a dream," he said once more, and opened his eyes with astonishment upon the gloomy road, along which he was still proceeding at a foot-pace. He marvelled at the extraordinary regions in which his mind had been wandering and at the sudden change to reality. It was growing dark and

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beginning to drizzle. He bent his shoulders, pulled his hat over his eyes, and thus jogged on for a mile or two. "Yes, we seem to be lost in a maze," he muttered at last into the collar of his coat; "sport, politics, the future, it's all the same. . . . I wonder if there's any way out of it. . . ."

## BENEATH THE SURFACE

No one was more surprised than myself when Fin Lund, the Danish explorer, asked me to accompany him on his journey through the middle and lower districts of Mesopotamia. We were practically strangers at the time, and I had travelled very little. I lectured twice a week at the London University on Archæology. It was my only claim to distinction of any kind. When I told my chief, Dr. Strachan Smith, the classical archæology professor, he was very frank about it.

"It's a great chance for you," he said, adjusting the flame of the gas-stove in his den in the Archæology Department, "but why on earth has he pitched upon you?"

"I really can't say," I answered, after a moment's pause.

"Did he give you any reason?"

Fin Lund had given me a reason, but it was one which I felt unable to explain to the professor.

“What do you know about the antiquities of those regions?” he went on, “and for that matter, what does *he* know?”

The professor seemed to be a good deal agitated about something. He went to the end of the room, and fetched his dispatch-case, which lay with his mackintosh on a table amid a debris of ancient pottery.

“Look here!” he said, nervously opening the case, and producing a folded copy of the *Globe* newspaper, “have you seen this interview?”

There was an electrical look about his hair and beard, which showed that he was suffering from suppressed irritation. I had not seen the interview, and I reached out my hand for it rather eagerly.

“Yes, you’d better read it,” he said.

“The head-line ran, “Distinguished Explorer hopes to discover the Garden of Eden.”

I glanced through it, whilst Strachan Smith walked up and down his den, with his long fingers interlaced and writhing behind his back.

“It’s not as if Fin Lund was a mere impostor and ignoramus,” he was saying, “he knows his own subject as well as any one.

But why on earth does he meddle with things about which he knows nothing at all ? Isn't it rubbish ? ”

I was hurriedly reading the interview, without listening to these nervous diatribes. Fin Lund had poured forth to the interviewer a good many rather startling views about Biblical names and places. There were references to the ruins of Nineveh, the Tower of Babel, the Land of Nod, and so on, finishing up with the Garden of Eden, the site of which he hoped to cross.

When I had finished reading, Strachan Smith took the paper from my hands, and gave it a vindictive beat, as he fixed his eyes on the article again.

“ What will Peters say to this ? ” he said, mentioning a colleague in the Oriental Department. “ And not one single word about his own special job ! No one would gather that he was employed by the German Government to make a survey of the lower reaches of the Euphrates, and correct the existing maps. That's the kind of thing he *can* do—it's his job—but this kind of tosh—” He bent down to pick up a piece of chalk which lay on the



floor, near the blackboard which he used with his private pupils.

"And what part are *you* to play?" he went on, tossing the chalk into the waste-paper basket. "You know something about Crete, but, my dear Horton, anything east of that is a sealed book to you."

"He asked me to go as his secretary and companion," I said.

"And what is he going to *do*?" said the professor, his voice rising to something of a scream. "Is he going to dig, and archæologize, or is he merely doing a job for the German engineers?"

He gazed again indignantly at the pink page of the *Globe*.

"What conceited rubbish it is!" he said. "He speaks for all the world as if he were the first person who had ever handled these subjects. Listen to this! 'The Bible is the most wonderful book in the world.'" The professor put on a pompous mimicking air. "'The countries of the Bible are the Europe of the ancient world.' He speaks as if no one had ever heard of the Bible before. 'It is probable that future generations will see

a flood of light thrown on Biblical names and places of which we have at the present day no conception. *My* little trip may prove to be a small contribution to that end.' And then follows that extraordinary bit about the Garden of Eden and the four rivers which flowed out of it, one of which he says was the Euphrates. Fancy this kind of thing after the work of Steinitz and the *Assyriologische-band* ! ”

“ I think he knows something of the subject,” I said.

“ Ah, but it's all so characteristic, Horton,” went on the professor. “ Fin Lund is a self-advertiser, and a vulgar one ; yes, and something of an impostor too. You know Newbank knocked holes in him about those lakes which he c'aimed to have discovered. Not only had they been discovered before, but Fin Lund never went there himself at all ! ” The professor's voice rose to its falsetto note again. He sat down on a small cane-bottomed chair, one of the two belonging to the archæological “ lab.,” and stretched his spare form backwards with his long fingers clasped behind his head.

“Mind you,” he said, “I don’t deny the man has certain elements of genius, especially a great power of work. But the most egotistical, vain, impossible sort of person!—and quarrelsome, my dear Horton. Some of Lund’s quarrels have achieved a European reputation! He’s the most fearful man to travel with. Lifelong enmities arise from his trips!”

“I haven’t found him that sort of man at all,” I said. “I think you’re mistaken about him.”

“Well, tell me how you came across him. Why on earth did he pitch upon you as his secretary?”

“I simply met him at the Mountaineers’ Club dinner. We fell into talk later—and—and there seemed to be some kind of an affinity between us—at least we had an interesting talk, and he asked me to come and see him. We made great friends, and he invited me to be his secretary.”

“Well, I congratulate you, Horton,” said Strachan Smith, sitting up on the edge of his frail chair. “I think it’ll help you professionally. Fin Lund’s name is often before

the public, and they think more of him in America than we do here. But I don't think you know what you've let yourself in for. I believe he saw you were the most unassuming, long-suffering man in the world, and therefore he chose you as his travelling companion."

Some women students had come in with notebooks and pencils. The professor got up to show them a vase from Ægina, and our conversation came to an end.

I mention it at some length because it shows how little the world in general, and especially the scientific world, understood my friend, Fin Lund.

The article in the *Globe* was a shock even to me at the time. He had said so little to me about the archæological side of our journey down the Euphrates. It did not, however, shake my confidence in him. For I had implicit faith in Fin Lund. That was why he asked me to accompany him. That was why I went. That was the whole secret of the thing—the extraordinary faith which he inspired in me—although I did not give this reason to Dr. Strachan Smith.

Now, after experiencing the same misunder-

standings and incredulity on the part of the scientific world for something like twelve years, I write the following pages as yet another attempt on my part to make known the wonderful performance and achievement of the greatest explorer that ever lived.

Fin Lund took me with him for that express purpose. I was to interpret him to others. He took me in order that some one might be the witness of his final journey on earth—for so he expected it to be. Its immensely successful conclusion, and his disappearance, were actually witnessed by me, and it was Lund's hope that I should explain those phenomena to the scientific world.

So far, I have failed to do this, but I do not despair of some day establishing the facts of that wonderful journey, however much the professors may jeer. At any rate I shall never cease to bring them to people's notice, and here and there some will be found to believe me.

I must go back to the moment when I first met him. Here again I noticed the same thing, a total inability to comprehend the man's greatness. It was a guest-night at

the Mountaineers' Club. At the dinner I was seated beside Baffie, a typical mountaineer of the older generation. Besides being a traveller and climber of some distinction, he wielded a very trenchant and mordant pen—editor at one time of the *Scottish Review*. He was a sworn foe of Lund's.

"Merely a glorified globe-trotter," he murmured into his soup, as he sat beside me, for the explorer was in earshot not far down the other side of the table. "An unlettered man with a newspaper reputation, partly imposture, partly luck."

Although I knew but little of Lund at that time, I disagreed with Baffie. I liked the look of the explorer as he sat at table. It seemed to me that there was something pure in his expression, a touch of the desert in the ruggedness of his face and the clearness of his eye—an expression which did not seem to have worn off even in the midst of the banality of a club dinner, and which suited ill with Baffie's account of him.

"The amount of his travels at any rate is amazing," I said; "he has been everywhere."



"Quantity, not quality," said Baffie. "And he goes where he has no business to go, and does things he has no right to do. All through Asia he was simply travelling in Newbank's footsteps. And if he ever reached those desert lakes, he simply had no business to get there. Newbank saw him at Leh in Ladak. His equipment was ridiculous."

The din of conversation was increasing, but presently Lund's voice began to overtop the rest, not it seemed in my opinion from self-assertiveness, but because of some intense earnestness which seemed to characterize his views. These views were, however, unfortunate on that evening, as the conversation had turned to Mount Everest, of which he spoke slightly, declaring that the idea that it was the highest mountain in the world was a geographer's myth. He had himself climbed higher. Baffie, who had been on the slopes of Everest, was deeply wounded. His strong moustache stood out in a more brush-like fashion than ever, as he glared across the table at the explorer, and it was as much as I could do, by talking of other things, to avert an unpleasant scene.

But what put every one's back up was the speech Lund made in replying for the guests. It was just that speech which was the beginning of my deep interest in this man, and I come now to the first of those phenomena of his life, and of our intercourse, which are not in line with ordinary experience.

The other guests in the room regarded this speech as an error of bad taste, because from first to last it concerned the journey he was about to make down the Euphrates. He described the route he intended to follow, and the purpose for which he was going, namely, to make a new survey of the course of the river. He spoke with great emphasis and some detail about these things, and spoke for a good half-hour. He spoke as if the journey were of high importance to the world in general; and all this merely in replying to the toast of the guests. It was uncalled for, out of focus, and much too emphatic. As Baffie said afterwards, when we were in the cloakroom going away, "What on earth was the fellow driving at? Heaps of people have made that journey from Bagdad to Basra. It's a trade route and it's

a tourist route, and it has all been surveyed and mapped times and again," and he tossed some coppers into the attendant's saucer, and went away in a very bad temper.

That I saw was a pretty general opinion amongst the rest of the men, as they lit cigarettes and searched for hats and cloaks around me.

But my impression had been totally different. What my experience was, is not easily explained; because the effect which the speech had upon me was something quite beyond the actual words in which it was uttered. I could see that he had no skill in making after-dinner speeches, and was quite at a loss for the right sort of platitudes and witticisms to suit the occasion; but being on his legs and having to say something, he said what was uppermost or deepest in his mind. It was just that which affected me. As the speech proceeded, it laid hold of me in an altogether novel, wonderful way. He spoke about the River Euphrates, the rate of its current, and the variation of its course in its sandy bed, or in the lower marshy regions. And as he spoke, quite apart from

the surface meaning of the words, which were dry and rather technical, there entered into my mind a sense of the movement and atmosphere of that river, in such a way that it filled my imagination and made me almost oblivious of my surroundings. It was as if behind his words there lay the inmost essence and spirit of the river, into which he had already entered, and with which he was familiar. With my outward vision I saw the tense expression on his rugged face, and his wiry figure and round head with its short-cropped grey hair, and the two orders which he wore, one round his neck, the other on his coat, and I heard his dry words, spoken in good English with a quaint mixture of American and foreign pronunciation, and I saw around me a bored and listless audience, and once I heard Baffie call loudly to the waiter for a cigar in the middle of the speech. And all the time, with my inner eye, I contemplated the mystery of that river and the desert as one of the marvels of the world, and felt the slide of a mighty stream, as if it were an active force, flowing around us and about us, flowing round Lund himself. It was.

extraordinary. For it seemed as if a vista were opening in my mind, as he spoke. I got a strange new sense of the civilization of the peoples that once lived on the banks of the Euphrates. I seemed to seize on its very atmosphere, hidden in some remote antiquity but teeming with life. I thought I stood upon the shores of a forgotten world. And all this came simply from the monotonous voice of a speaker with whom the rest of the company were bored, and who was using nothing but the most ordinary geographical terms and descriptions. When he had finished, I could not tell how long he had spoken; it might have been minutes, it might have been hours.

I walked home, wondering over this experience, with the sense of the river and its movement still upon me, and I tried to form some explanation of the influence which Lund's personality had upon me, and the extraordinary difference in its effect upon myself and the other people. Was this effect purely subjective on my part, and the result of some freak of my own imagination? Or could it be that Lund's genius as an

explorer was of such an extraordinary kind that it had passed beyond average comprehension? That just as a great musician invents new harmonies and combinations of sound which are at first beyond the grasp of his hearers, so to Lund's genius, travel had become something new—a science and an art different to any that had existed before? This was what his speech and his manner and the general effect of his words suggested to me. It was only by degrees that I came to understand what Lund really was. Afterwards I realized how enormously my first theories about his genius lagged behind the great reality, but they were a step in the right direction—true as far as they went.

That same night I had a further experience which led me to ask myself still more insistently, whether or no all this could have sprung from a few words spoken at an after-dinner speech. And if so, what was the power in this man? How did it arise? Whence did it spring? For as I was going to bed, I threw up the window of my flat at the top of Abingdon Mansions, and looked



down into the street below. There was a public-house at the corner which was just closing. A small group of cronies and familiars of the place were still talking, in a little knot outside it. As I looked down some six stories on to this group, it appeared to me that something was moving in the atmosphere between myself and the lights below. The air was perfectly clear. The night was still, and the stars were shining overhead. As I stared down into the air and darkness below me, I saw that this impression of movement, whatever it was, was as different as possible from anything that could be caused by gusty puffs of smoke, or mist or flying rain. Something large and spacious seemed to be flowing by, a kind of smooth unlaboured motion in the air. The sensation was exhilarating. I was so anxious not to be deceived by my senses, or by any unusual condition of my own mind, that I closed the window, and waited for a few minutes in my room, to shake off the impression, if it was unreal. Then I opened the window again. The night was very beautiful. I looked down, and felt more than ever the impression of movement,

flowing *from* me now, and onward to a great distance. I felt as if I could see through the public-house below, and catch a glimpse of the wrinkled edge of some great robe of sliding atmosphere beyond it. As I looked, the impression deepened, and as it deepened, I thought it was accompanied by a sound, soft as feathers, but deep like thunder; and then the whole thing suddenly lifted again, and passed away. The lingering group of people in the street below were walking away in ones and twos, in different directions, calling out parting observations, their feet echoing on the pavement. A hand drew down the blind in the top story of the public-house. Even the barmaid had gone to bed, and I wondered if I had really seen anything at all. But I remained with my elbows on the window-sill, looking out across the night. At any rate this wondrous sense of movement had subdued my thoughts and exalted my spirit. There was something grand and great about it. A quiet sense of the littleness of myself and the mightiness of the universe came to me. A softer atmosphere filled the night. The world seemed larger and more

conscious. And something of this sense remained with me all through my dreams that night. I dreamed of a river which flowed in harmony with the wind and the sky and the clouds above it, all one movement; it flowed to music through a corn-bearing plain, so vast that it seemed to be the granary of the whole world, and everywhere the harvest was being gathered in by men whose deeply bronzed skins and white linen robes and curved sickles were shining in the sun. As I was waking this movement was setting itself to words in my mind. There was a rhythm about it. The river was striding and marching along past its banks, and this movement fell into numbers and verse; but I could remember none of them when I opened my eyes.

It was only a few evenings afterwards that I met Lund again at the annual *Conversazione* at the University. I was walking with Dr. Annie Rogers, the lecturer in botany, when we saw him in one of the corridors. I had had some hopes that he might be present at this annual intellectual "crush," and I had

been looking about for him, and when I saw him in the crowd, there came to me a shock of joy, such as a man might experience who suddenly sees the one girl whom he wishes to see, and for whom he has been waiting and looking all the evening. And these emotions were awakened in me by the sight of a round grey bullet-shaped head in the crowd, not one hair upon which was more than a quarter of an inch long. The corridor was brilliantly lit for the occasion by the students of the Physics Department. An ornamental palm was placed near the entrance of the physics demonstration room, under which he stood. Some experiments had just been given in the lecture-room by Lord Wray, on light, or rather about some new lines which he had recently discovered in the spectrum, and every one was talking about them, as they came out into the corridor.

"I wish he wouldn't stand in the doorway like that," I heard one of the stewards say. "People can't get past him. He's been standing there uttering platitudes under that palm-tree for I don't know how long."

Sure enough I caught Lund's rather nasal

strident tones cutting across the academic shop that was going on around us, and people were stopping to listen as they went past. When I and my companion got near him we saw that he was really talking to little Miss Field, the botany student, and was quite oblivious of the crowd. There was an inward look on his face—something remote and far-off. He seemed to be fetching his remarks out from some depths within him. He had evidently been deeply interested in the experiments; and he seemed now to be giving a sort of supplementary lecture of his own in very loud penetrating tones.

“It’s a wonderful thing,” I heard him saying, “that light should have been created before anything else, created before the sun, or the moon, or the stars. I guess there is a good deal of science in that account of the creation. I don’t hold with the higher criticism. I guess the man that wrote that first chapter of the Bible was a very remarkable Jew, who lived in Chaldæa, when they made the clay tablets, and who knew as well what he was talking about as our friend at the demonstration table there. You agree

with me, sir ? ” and he fixed his eyes on mine, as I was standing close to him listening.

His eyes were very penetrating and bright, and appeared to be full of wonder, like a child's, but at the bottom of them there was a curious baffled look, which I did not know how to explain. His face was very attractive to me, though it was plain and lined, his skin like parchment, and his bullet head was anything but æsthetic. When I looked at the faces surrounding him, there seemed to be a difference in kind between his expression and theirs which made his own very pleasing.

“ I'm afraid I've never studied that account in Genesis,” I said, “ but I suppose it's ideally true, if not literally. I had the pleasure of hearing you at the Mountaineers' the other night. Your speech impressed me very deeply.”

He looked at me again with that penetrating glance, which yet had a baffled look underlying it.

“ Did it convey to you some idea of the trip I am contemplating ? ” he said.

“ It gave me a very wonderful sense of it,” I said, “ and of the river, and its movement



through the desert. I can scarcely account for the effect which it had upon me."

He looked at me then, half startled, with a deep inquiry in his eyes, and I answered this inquiry with a steady affirmative look in my own, and neither of us spoke a word.

But at that moment the Vice-Chancellor and Lord Wray came out of the lecture-room together, and an introduction took place between the explorer and the famous physicist, and together they walked away down the corridor, and I did not see Lund again that evening.

I walked away with Dr. Annie Rogers, she in her flowing evening gown, made all of one piece from shoulders to feet.

"What an extraordinary man!" she laughed, "quite a fish out of water—only in this case it's the fish that talks, whilst the others gape and gasp. He seems to be too big for his shoes, or something, doesn't he?"

But my thoughts were far away. It was from that moment that I gained my implicit faith and confidence in Fin Lund. How it happened, I cannot exactly tell. It had begun already at my first sight of him. Now

my thoughts seemed to rise. It was as if I had taken a step out of myself. My own views, my career, my beliefs about the world in which I lived, my whole personal life, all seemed to recede into the background, whilst the man who had been standing there under the ornamental palm in his evening clothes became to me from that moment forward of greater importance than anything else in the world.

And the very next day after this involuntary act of faith—which seemed to surge up within me without any will of my own—I met him again, apparently by accident, in Piccadilly Circus. A great press of traffic was moving all round me, the orderly manner in which the buses and taxis circulated past the fountain and down the main arteries and channels, like flowing streams, impressed me more than usual, as I stood on the kerb, watching it and waiting for an opportunity to cross. And then suddenly this traffic opened, and out of it came the explorer, well buttoned up in a greatcoat with a scarf round his neck; it was the month of Feb-

ruary. He came straight towards me. I looked hard at him, as he stepped on to the pavement, and he at once recognized me, and held out his hand.

"So you are interested in my Euphrates journey," he said.

"More than in any other project I have ever heard of," I answered.

He evinced no surprise this time, but he nodded rather gravely.

"You would like to hear more about it?"

"I want nothing else so much," I said.

A February wind was blowing in the sky over our heads, with the faintest touch of earliest spring in it. He looked up above the roofs and wires, and hugged himself with a kind of smile.

"Well, come out and spend the afternoon with me at Pinner. I have rooms in the country there. I'll tell you more about it."

He made an appointment with me, gave me his address, and was once more swallowed up by the traffic. I remained on the kerb, looking at the address in my hand, "Fir Cottage, Pinner," whilst it seemed to me that the roar of London round me had an inspiring

note in it, as though it were in touch with some deeper and more essential movement of things.

Next afternoon, I went out by the Metropolitan past Harrow, and after walking through muddy country lanes, found myself at Fir Cottage.

There was a weather-beaten notice of "Apartments" surmounting the hedge, behind which stood the little house, with a rough lawn in front of it. As I arrived the explorer was coming down the lane in his long grey ulster, and he met me at the gate. The February wind was crashing in the elms overhead.

"Now we can have a great talk," he shouted, as he led me into the passage, and thence into a room with the window facing the lawn.

He sat down in a chair still in his ulster, and tossed his wideawake hat into a corner of the room.

"Do you know the East?" he said to me. "Are you a geographer, a traveller? Are you acquainted with the Euphrates? What is it that has interested you so much in my journey?"

His unceremonious manner put me at my ease.

"I heard your speech at the Mountaineers'," I said. "I felt that something more lay behind it than was actually spoken."

He nodded and signed to me to remove my coat and sit down.

"Tell me what was the impression my speech conveyed," he said.

"On the rest of the company it made little impression. It did not reach them. But it affected me profoundly."

"And in what way did it touch you?"

I hesitated.

"It is difficult to find words in which to express it."

"Ah! that is very true. That is the real difficulty—how to find the words."

He rose up, his face full of excitement and life, went to the door and called to his landlady to bring tea, and then came back again and faced me on the other side of the fire.

"But try to find the words," he said; "try to explain to me what you felt."

"I was conscious of a sensation of movement, like the movement of the river itself.

This sensation remained with me for some time afterwards. When I got home, the impression was so strong that—from my window I seemed to see a kind of river in the atmosphere flowing through the night. It seemed to me almost as if the very spirit of the River Euphrates had entered into you.”

He nodded.

“Stop a minute,” he said, smiling. “You know I am a man of science. I do not want poetry. I only want facts. Your experience interests me, and I partly know its cause. Would that you could grasp the principles and the laws which lie back of my journeys, and give them a scientific form! You have faith in me. I can feel that. You are something of a *rara avis* it seems, a man trained in the academic schools who yet believes in me and understands something of the spirit in which I travel.”

“What is the spirit in which you travel?”

There was silence for a moment. He drew his chair a little closer to the fire, and spread out his hands to the blaze.

“I travel, I think, as migrating birds do,” he said at last, “or like the salmon, or the



land-locked eel, which makes its way down to the ocean to breed. I travel because I must. The motion to do so comes on me as an imperious necessity, with a sense of movement, of rhythm, of singing. My journeys are worked out at white heat, as mental conceptions, ideas, before they ever take shape in action. Before I consult maps or look up routes, I enter into the essential atmosphere of a country, saturate myself in its spirit, and see into the very sinews of its being. This atmosphere comes as an inspiration from outside myself—as a breath from the desert, or from hilly forests, or grassy regions with broad river-beds. It is indescribable—this sense of the inner being of some locality—its peculiar character as distinct from all other spots on the earth. Afterwards it shapes itself into definite form, and the journey comes into being.”

He was silent for a moment.

“You are describing a vivid faculty for locality,” I said, “a genius for travel, such as belongs to few men. But is that all? What is the meaning of this Euphrates journey that you contemplate?”

He looked at me for a moment with eyes charged with thought. Then he continued :

“ You are going too fast, but your question is pertinent. You are right. Genius will account for a vast deal, but not for everything. During the earlier part of my life, I travelled under the impulsion of this *Wanderlust*, as the Germans call it. I crossed Central Asia, and made my journeys in Arabia, and on the northern side of the Himalayas, and again in Northern China and Siberia, without knowing why I travelled. It was simply the roving spirit which led me on, which came on me with a sense of mysterious joy, and power, and energy. But later on it became increasingly clear to me that this power was more than myself, more than my own brain, or imagination, or resource. I was gaining a momentum, I was beginning to move automatically, as it were. I was being swept along by the suction of some power which went before me. I moved *with* Nature.”

His face had become white with the intensity of his thoughts. I strained my mind to catch his meaning.

“What is this power that you mean?” I said.

“Listen to me,” he continued in a lower tone. “Things have been left as they are by the movement of a deeper power. Nothing is real as we see it. Trees, for instance, mere concretions of bark, wood, and moss, as they appear to me, are channels left by this moving power of life; they are husks, coats, skins, which it has sloughed off and left standing upright in the earth, with a certain dwindling momentum still in them, which we call the life of the tree. The sun, moon, and stars are eddies set up by the passage of this eternal power. That streak across the heavens which we call the Milky Way, shows the passage of this power. At that enormous distance the path which its movement has traced is clearly seen. Here on earth we are too close to it to be aware of it. But I noticed the blaze of this trail here in the earth on which we live.”

His voice rose slightly with a note of triumph in it. Then he continued again in a lower tone:

“My travels led me usually through unin-

habited regions. I have seen much desert, mountains, rivers too unmanageable to be of service to man, snow, ice and rock, and salt lakes as large as seas. I passed through these regions in the manner I have described, with extraordinary energy, and with the swift, certain instinct of a homing pigeon—until I began to realize what this instinct was. I began to see that barren and waste as were these wildernesses, there was a meaning in them—a meaning in my journeys. My instinct was really *recognition*. It was the apprehension of a truth, the reading of a language. I was following a path, noticing signs and indications of some power that had passed by, and left these regions as I saw them——”

I caught at his meaning, and tried to grapple with it.

“This room, for instance,” I said, “when we have left it, will show signs of our presence here. The chairs left in certain positions, papers disarranged, your pipe lying there, and the matches on the floor, and so on—all of them indications of our presence here. So, too, the world of physical nature, disordered

and strange as it appears, shows signs of some deeper power that passes, or has passed through it."

"That is partly what I mean," he said. "The secret of the whole matter lies in movement. Movement underlies creation—perpetual motion—which always replenishes wherever it depletes, flows in again where it has flowed out, gives where it takes, and recedes whilst it attracts—so that no one portion moves without a corresponding movement of the whole. The surface movement of our lives is only the froth and surge on the fringe of this deeper movement. And that is the secret of my travels! Through the intense energy of my early wanderings, through the momentum which I gathered in the course of them, and by following the sweep and direction of that deeper movement, as I recognized it by a kind of inspiration, blazed across the surface of the earth, I entered at last into that deeper stream itself, passed into its swing and flow, and began to move with the intense and fixed purpose of a star flashing through space. It was when I was crossing the lakes in the desert of Gobi,

that I first became aware of it. Then I knew I was speeding onward as the stars move, deep in the heart of Nature itself, moving in conscious harmony with the eternal unlaboured movement of the universe. I had broken through the outer crust of things. Those lakes, which I then discovered and mapped, were only faint surface indications of this deeper sea of conscious life, into which I had entered."

There was silence for a moment. I thought of that invisible stream which had presented itself to my imagination, flowing through and beneath the roofs and streets visible from the window of my flat. Could that have been the result of Lund's consciousness of the eternal stream of things communicating itself to my mind, through my sympathy with him, and the faith which I had in him?

"All that you say," I remarked at last, "corresponds with certain indications of it which I have experienced in my own consciousness. Otherwise it would not be more than words to me. But what I need to know now is this. If it is true that you have entered into this movement, where is it lead-



ing you? What is its goal? What is attained by this journey down the Euphrates?"

"Yes," he said, "now we come to my Euphrates journey," and he rose to his feet and smiled at me. "I will show you some papers in connexion with that journey, and we'll have the lamp lit, and drink a cup of tea over it, and go thoroughly into the subject," and he went out of the room.

I had also risen to my feet, and stood looking out of the window. Dusk was falling outside. I saw the wind flogging the rough grass and the crocuses on the lawn, and heard it crashing boisterously in the elms overhead. There was something glorious in the sound. It seemed to pierce deeper than physics or learning.

Lund returned with some papers in his hand, and tea was brought and the lamp lit. He selected a long blue envelope and handed it to me.

"Read it," he said.

I glanced it over. It was a rather voluminous document, but I saw that it was a request to Fin Lund from a company, calling itself the Persian and Levant International

Transport Company, to amend the maps of the Euphrates between certain points of its course. After looking it through, I handed it back to him.

“Those are the credentials of my journey,” he said, with a smile. “According to outsiders, that is the sole purpose and object of my journey—to correct the existing maps of that district. The German Government is behind it of course, and it doubtless concerns the extension of the Bagdad Railway, but the company is a Turkish one. That is all that the general public see, and all that the experts see, either. Neither in the press, nor in any public utterance, do I come within a hundred miles of the real meaning of the journey. For this offer,” indicating the envelope, “came to me *after* I had already made my plans for the trip. It was a sequel. The conception of this expedition through Mesopotamia and ancient Chaldæa came upon me mentally with a rush—in the insistent, imperious way which I have described, and *afterwards*, when I was still without means to carry it out—for I have but small means of my own at my disposal—when I was casting about for

some way of working it, and knowing from previous experience that the right way would open out, this arrived," and he held up the envelope again. "It is a wonderful thing, the power and guidance of Nature. You yourself have felt something of it—it has drawn you a little towards it. It is like a stream—it flows with me, it affects phenomena, right and left, *before* me, as well as behind me——"

He broke off, and looked into the fire. The light from the shaded lamp on the table threw the strong lines of his brow and mouth into relief.

"And if this offer from the Turkish company," I said, "represents merely the surface movement on the fringe of that stream, what is the deeper meaning of the journey? Where is the stream carrying you ultimately?"

"I cannot say definitely, for my business is simply to follow. But one thing I know for certain. This movement of Nature draws out from some source, and flows back there again. The stream flows continually in upon itself, even as it also simultaneously wells out from itself. The current into which I have myself begun to enter is the backward,

not the outward flow—the homeward current running into the source of things. And hence my reason conjectures that on the surface of things, too, I shall trace back the trail, and follow the spoor of life to its source, back down that old river, the River Euphrates, and past the ruined cradles of many civilizations which lie in the sand on its banks, and back through the ancient land of Chaldæa, possibly right back to that spot, which Hebrew lore regarded as the beginning of things and named the Garden of Eden! Who knows? Its site is generally believed to be in those parts, and the River Euphrates is said to have flowed out of it. But it is not my business to speculate on these things, but, as I said, simply to follow.”

I was silent for a while.

“It is a wonderful thing,” I said at last, “that in the twentieth century a man should at last have achieved what you have done—should have pierced so deeply into the heart of things.”

“You are something of a miracle, Mr. Horton,” said the explorer, looking intently at me, and I noticed for the first time that

that curious baffled look at the bottom of his grey eyes had departed from them completely. "You are the first man I have ever met who has believed in me, who has had faith. And this is the more wonderful, because your intellect is analytical and has been trained in the academic schools. The ignorance and incredulity of the scientific world is to me the most baffling of all the experiences I have encountered—far more difficult to meet than desert, mountain range, or ice-floe. I cannot get away from it. It weighs on me like an incubus. It hedges me round. It is impossible for me to express what I am doing, to convey it to others even in the smallest degree. For all this that I have been telling you is scientific fact, it is discovery and achievement. But I am like a man in a nightmare, whose senses are sleep-bound, and who cannot utter a sound, try as he will to shout and make his voice heard. If *you*—you with your knowledge of the schools, and your scholarly training, were able to formulate some working hypothesis by which to elucidate the phenomena of my life, and interpret them scientifically, you

would be doing me, and possibly the whole world, an infinite service."

"I desire nothing more than that," I said, "but how am I to find the opportunity for this study?"

"Come with me down the Euphrates, and observe for yourself."

In my heart I never hesitated for an instant after I had once heard that thrilling invitation, spoken with deep earnestness as his clear eyes looked straight into mine. But for the moment I was so charged with a sense of the hitherto undreamed of possibilities which were looming upon my life, that I scarcely felt able to continue the conversation. There was so much that I needed to ask and to know that it overwhelmed me. I told Lund that I must think it all over at home, and see him again shortly, and after drinking a cup of tea and smoking a cigarette I went. He looked at me with a real appeal as I was going, which stirred me deeply, and just as I was parting from him, as we stood at the gate under the black elms, I said:

"You may rely on me that I shall do my utmost to see these facts in their true light,



and interpret them in the way you wish. I realize what your need is, and what you require of me."

He shook me warmly by the hand.

"You may have been sent to do this work for me. I cannot do it myself. My work is different. My business is—just to travel on. Some one else must do the rest for me and struggle with the world of science. You perhaps are the one."

He smiled kindly at me, and I walked away down the lane.

So I was appointed intermediary between Fin Lund and the scientific world. To what extent I have been able to fulfil this mission and apostleship only time will show. Hitherto I have not been successful. This is partly due to my own weakness and cowardice. But chiefly it is due to the fact that I have not really penetrated into and understood the law which underlay Fin's life and travels. I can only record the facts, in such words as suggest themselves, or as he used himself. I cannot explain them scientifically any better than he could. Yet I know that all that happened on that journey was the

result of some infallible law, which ought to admit of explanation.

A day or two later I wrote to Lund, and said that I was ready to go with him, if he would take me—to go with him in the spirit in which he wished me to go, to watch and observe and centre all my faculties on the description of his method of travel, and I added that I had implicit confidence in the scientific character of the phenomena which his achievements as an explorer represented, although at present I only understood them vaguely, and by a species of faith or sympathy.

He answered as follows :

“DEAR HORTON,—If you can see your way to coming out with me in three weeks’ time, that is to say, on March 15, you will be of great service to me. Rely on yourself, not on me. If you think it worth while to come, you will find the means to do so. I will pay half your travelling expenses, but cannot assist you further. Let me know your decision.

“Yours, etc.,

“FIN LUND.”

As I read this letter, there stole into my mind the first shadow of doubt. It did not affect my purpose. I was determined to go, and nothing would have held me back. Yet that little shadow of doubt was in my mind somewhere, and there soon came times when it strengthened, and stood out formidably, and bid fair to paralyse all my resolution. For I staked my all on Lund, and when a man has done that, he becomes a handle to fears, until his confidence has stood the test of experience.

I had many a mental struggle before my departure. And I saw nothing of Fin Lund through it all. He left me severely alone. I made some efforts to see him, but failed, and I did not actually set eyes on him again till we met on the platform of Victoria Station, half an hour before our train started. During this time I had to resign my post at the University. Although Dr. Strachan Smith was very kind to me about the whole affair, yet the Faculty did not see their way to giving me a term's leave, as they did not consider that I was prosecuting any definite line of research, and they regarded the

journey as an adventure which they could not officially recognize on the part of a junior lecturer. Academically speaking, I burned my ships by going, and such small savings as I had, I saw would be swallowed up by the journey. I was also not without some home ties and responsibilities, into which I need not enter; suffice it to say that the strain of my departure was considerable, and I was sometimes far from being successful in fortifying my mind against the fears and doubts which thronged in on me.

The most deadly of these was the thought that I was acting under the influence of some strong psychic suggestion, without reality behind. This idea was thrown out by one Loewy, an old schoolfellow of mine of University College School, with whom I talked about my projected journey, and to whom I told the story of how I had suddenly gained an implicit faith in the explorer. He looked at me in his wise way—he always did know everything, even as a schoolboy—and said, “My dear Horton, the man has mesmerized you. He has magnetic power. He has taken possession of your mind, and

probably done it deliberately. Those abnormal phenomena which accompany your relation to him, are simply hypnotism." At the moment that he said it, I did not feel that the remark had reached me. We were at tea at the corner of Tottenham Court Road in a shop on the first floor. From where I sat I could see a river of buses flowing past the window, and the traffic circulating in all directions. It seemed to me that I saw the fallacy underlying Loewy's remark. He confused the man's personality with the power that lay behind it. It was that deeper force into which his life had partially entered which affected me. Loewy's mistake seemed to me as obvious as would be the mistake of some one who confused the person of a man standing in a river with the river itself. As the truth glimmered on me, I regained momentarily my sense of that something in Lund which had affected me, the wonderful sense of movement. It seemed at that instant like the easy unlaboured movement of a vast wheel, or of "wheels within wheels," and for a moment the roar of the traffic jostling past the window took

on a deeper, more sonorous and harmonious sound. I looked across the marble table into my friend Loewy's face. "No, it's not the man's personality which has affected me," I said, "it's something infinitely greater," and I felt it at the time.

Yet his view-point stuck, and combined with other doubts and the numerous questionings, anxious or inquisitive, which I had to endure from relatives and friends, produced in me a very troubled state of mind, which grew worse until the very day of our departure. Something approaching terror would seize upon me at times, as I tried in vain to envisage those dim and enormous spaces of thought, which had for a few brief instants and in one short conversation been opened to my experience, only to be covered again by an impenetrable veil of obscurity and doubt.

I was in this condition of mind when I reached the platform at Victoria. I fear that the only thing which really kept me going was the fact that we were to travel through Rome, Brindisi, Greece, and Syria to the point where we were to embark on



our journey down the Euphrates, and though I lost hold of the deeper side of our journey, and the profound meanings that it tapped, the thought of the antiquities of the lands which we were to pass through, of which I certainly knew far more than the average tourist, kept up my spirits. All the rest was darkness. I was so nervous in fact that to my dismay I noticed myself unable to follow properly the porter's questions, or give him clear directions. In this distressing condition of mind I saw Lund, bag in hand, walk under the clock from the booking-hall on to the platform. He was talking with a man in an overcoat and bowler hat, who had a notebook in his hand, and whom I took to be a reporter. I went up to my friend, and as soon as he saw me, he smiled and shook me very warmly by the hand, and at the same time my doubts and fears subsided. He promised the reporter an interview on the train, and we went to find our carriage, whilst he continued talking to me. It was nothing that he said which restored my confidence, but I felt the normality of the man, and his grasp of the facts of life, and a

certain, kindly sympathy based on an underlying feeling of power, of ability to help, and to meet all the requirements of a situation.

"And you really think, Dr. Lund, that it is possible to identify the site of the Garden of Eden?" said the reporter, pencil in hand, after we had settled ourselves in the carriage.

Lund shut the door and put his head out of the window.

"The course of the Euphrates varies immensely," he said; "it is constantly shifting in its sandy bed, or again it has overflowed its banks and formed great districts which are little but swamp and mud and standing lagoons."

As he spoke the train had begun to move out of the station, and I could see the reporter scribbling Lund's remarks, as he walked beside the window.

"This is especially the case above the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, the river splits and reunites, and changes from year to year, amid a network of channels and canal-beds, some as old as Semiramis."

The reporter was now trotting beside the train.

“Cartographers have made a mess of that region,” went on Lund, talking very rapidly, “but I hope to get it properly mapped, and expect my journey will throw some light on the allegories of Genesis, and possibly do something towards attaching a scientific basis to the whole question of Biblical meanings.”

He shouted the last words to the reporter, as he stood on the extreme last slope of the platform, and the train was jumping about amongst the points.

“Shall we have it up?” he said, turning to me with a cheerful smile and his hand on the window-strap, and so our journey began.

Whether it was that I was elated at being once more in the company of Fin Lund, and that my feelings had undergone a good deal of revulsion from a preceding condition which bordered on panic, the whole of that journey to Rome passed like a dream. Forty-eight hours afterwards we were driving through

the streets of Rome, and I could scarcely believe that we had covered the distance so easily. It passed like a short week-end journey, and I have never travelled so smoothly and easily before. I remarked so to Lund that evening, as we stood on the balcony of the hotel before going to bed. We were in the Hotel des Anglais, close to S. Peter's, and could see the great dome rising up above the roofs like a shadowy replica in finite form of the immeasurable starry height above it. The close presence of so many marvels of architecture exhilarated me.

"You don't feel tired?" he said to me, looking out across the night.

"On the contrary, I feel rested," I said.

He nodded.

"That is a good beginning," he said.

"You see you are really travelling *with* me. You have reached the fringe of this vast subject. Your mind sympathizes with me, and with the sweep and onward momentum of the great stream, to which I cling. It has not been so with others. Which philosopher was it who said 'Panta Rei'—'All things

move ' ? But most men's minds move contrarily to mine. Hence arises friction, and disconnexion. You may have heard of the unfortunate quarrels and differences which have arisen between myself and fellow-travellers at various times. I watched them occur with pain, and with efforts to overcome them, but I was aware of my inability to do so, because of the cleavage between themselves and me. Or rather they were holding up and back against a power that moved on regardless of them. They were out of touch with it, and were borne onward unwillingly and in complete ignorance of what was happening beneath the surface—so they left me. But some day they will come into this stream, all the world will come to it—this wonderful ocean that flows for ever—which will draw into itself in good time the whole of this onward sweep we now call progress, and lead it gently back to its infinite origin."

He looked up into the deep shadows of the round dome, which seemed to float, suspended like a great protecting sphere over the city. On his face was a look of profound contentment and satisfaction.

But I was disappointed the next day. He did not come out with me to stroll about amongst the marvels of art and architecture which so fascinated me. It chilled my sympathy that he remained in the smoking-room talking to an American traveller on business matters, and showed no hint that he even realized how acutely I was moved by being once more in that wonderful city.

At last I went out alone, and in my wanderings came across Philip Cooke, the clerical tutor of S. John's, who was at work in the Vatican. I took him back to lunch at our hotel, and introduced him to Lund. During this lunch my heart sank low. Somehow Lund seemed out of the atmosphere of Rome, and things classical and archæological. Mr. Cooke had discovered a text of the Apology of Dexiogabalus, in the Vatican, which interested him greatly. His little watery blue eyes, which seemed made to bore their way into difficult palimpsest manuscripts, twinkled brightly, as he described over his cigar and glass of yellow wine how he had discovered the text of the Apology interpolated into a Syriac manuscript. But



Lund's conversation awoke all my former doubts and uneasiness. It was not a case with him of when in Rome doing as Rome does. Somehow in the society of this Fellow of S. John's, his talk seemed unlettered and even Philistine, and worst of all, it made me think, "After all, he is ignorant, he does not understand scientific research and scholarly thoroughness." I hated myself for thinking it, but ignorance always seemed to me the most terrible of things—as it is—and my blood almost ran cold, and my brain reeled to think that perhaps after all I had staked everything on an ignorant man without real observation or sympathy.

It was only a short time after this that something occurred which showed me how mistaken these thoughts were. Looking back, I am ashamed to think how lightly my mind shifted from its deeper impressions, to accept the surface value of things, which is no value at all, and how easily it dismissed all that greater world that lay beneath the surface, so that a few casual words, or the atmosphere of some familiar type of society, outweighed my deepest convictions and made me a

traitor to them. A great deal of experience is required before anything like a settled conviction can be attained, and in my total ignorance of the new conditions that Lund's life and energy had worked out, I was besieged with doubts. The society of the Rev. Philip Cooke had this effect upon me. We drove out together that afternoon into the country, and found ourselves presently under the slope of the low Alban hill amongst some olive woods, into which we walked, leaving the carriage. Mr. Cooke wore his black clerical hat and coat, and his round rubicund pippin-like visage glistened with perspiration in the hot white light of the Campagna. He was very animated in his description of the antiquities of this famous locality, where stood once the Villa of Clodius, and near to which he pointed out to us the remains of a "cloaca" or drain, some of the bricks of which had been stamped with the name of T. Annius Milo, the senatorial leader, whose influence in this district is borne out by Cicero's famous speech. This scholarly corroboration of Cicero's words interested me vastly. Overhead through the

trees stood the white walls of the little village of Pescari. Presently I heard Lund's voice calling us, and I noticed that he had strolled away, leaving Mr. Cooke and me to examine the cloaca together. He was standing now by some large square blocks of stone, grown over with moss, in the centre of the olive wood, and he had called us to look at them. Mr. Cooke's eyes fastened on them, and seemed to bore like gimlets into them.

"Ah, yes, prehistoric Cyclopean remains," he said, "the Campagna abounds in them, nothing is known of them."

The blocks were grown over with a wild rose-bush, and as we looked at them a woodpecker tapped the bole of an olive-tree close by, and a dry breeze began to stir through the sad grey-green foliage of the olives.

Lund sat down on the moss beside the stones.

"The old gods," he said, "were made of wood. Up there in the city," pointing up towards the village, "they stood in the wooden temples. There was old Father Italus with his sickle, and Father Sabinus with his pruning-hook, and Picus the wood-

pecker, and Janus who faced both ways." He put out one of his hands, and seemed to caress the great block of stone which nestled in the moss, with a smile. Then he looked up at the thick small-leaved foliage above our heads. "Those were the days of the untilled harvests of Italy," he said, "before the age of iron, before the age of stone even, when under their wooden semblances men worshipped the true gods of Nature."

There was not much in the words, but as he said them, there stole into my mind a sense of some order of life and history much more ancient than the Imperial city. I seemed to stand upon the original virgin soil of Italy, and to have penetrated into its true essential being as it was in the days of Saturn; and the history of Rome at that moment seemed to my mind like a dark blood-stained cloud overlying the real Italy. At the same time I was reminded forcibly of the feeling which I had experienced when Lund had made his speech at the Mountaineers', and I remembered the dream which I had had of the Eastern river and the vast corn-growing plains, which surrounded it.

There was something strangely akin to that atmosphere, though it was not the same, in the feelings which Lund's words now awakened. The breeze moved again through the olive-trees, and faintly stirred the wild rose which grew round the mossy blocks of stone. Beneath the surface-rustling of the leaves overhead and all round us I seemed to trace the tones of some deeper sound, filling the wood. Again I felt that profounder note which I had heard underlying even the roar of the traffic in London, and which I had felt accompanying the movement of the river. I turned to Lund, as a new thought had come into my mind.

"Virgil tells how the old Latin kings passed the night in a grove such as this," I said, "on a couch of piled-up sheepskins, in order that they might listen for the voice of Faunus, and commune with him."

"Yes," he said. "Can't you hear that voice now?"

And we were both silent, listening.

At that moment I happened to glance at Mr. Cooke. To my surprise and pain I saw on his face an involuntary look of disdain

and mockery, as he glanced at my companion. I knew he did not wish so to look, but the expression was there all the same. He, Mr. Cooke, looked exactly like one of the gargoyles on the churches at Rome; and suddenly I realized how difficult was the task which Lund had asked me to accept. It was evident that the scholar thought the explorer's words sentimental and gushing. What would ever convince him that they were the result of a far deeper experience and knowledge than his own?

This sense of the atmosphere and soil of some original prehistoric Italy remained with me all that day and the next, when we continued our journey via the port of Brindisi by steamer to Athens. It haunted me in a different way on the sea. I shall never forget the sight of the woods of Corfu rising out of the nimble tracts of moving wave which surrounded it. I had once travelled on this same route with a holiday gathering of schoolmasters and others, one of Lunn's tours, but I experienced then nothing at all resembling what I now felt in the company of Fin Lund.



The sea was something new to me. There was a sense of some intelligence brooding over it, haunting the depths of the wooded bays, and the rocky promontories round which we steamed. Nature seemed conscious. We travelled through a world of mythology, and when I saw blue smoke arising from some thick woods upon a jutting spit of land, it was no human being to whom that farm belonged, but a sun-witch weaving garments for the nymphs, and the sea seemed full of awful beings for whose sake all that it contained, existed. All this corroborated Lund's own explanations to me. It was because we were travelling in a new way, really travelling, not moving on the surface aspect of things, but passing through their essential qualities and being, through the secret springs which made them what they were, and which imparted to Nature a sense of the eternal. We were moving in a stream which embraced all time, and which moved the stars as well as ourselves. The actual indications of this seemed to me beyond doubt, and to point certainly in the direction which Lund had explained. Yet it will

scarcely be believed that with this evidence, colouring my own consciousness so unmistakably, and exactly corroborating his words, I should yet again and again have doubted him. But such was the case. The contrast between the surface of life with its modern accompaniments, the farcicalness of everyday things and our tourist surroundings, was so glaring when seen against the background of this stupendous force just looming into view, that it constantly chilled and upset me.

At Athens, for instance, there was a repetition of what I had experienced at Rome. I got into the society of the Museum people there, and saw the new pottery finds in the new wing of the British School of Archæology; and once more I felt depressed and awkward about my travelling companion. He himself, by the way, never dreamed. He was always practical, alert, in touch with the surface of things. In fact, on the surface it seemed to me that the most modern and up-to-date things were what principally interested him. I found myself again seeing him in a Philistine light, a friend of raw Americans, dollar-

hunters, and ignorant globe-trotters. I could see that my alliance with Lund was looked upon as an excellent joke by my friends of the British School.

One day we all went out together by train to see the Lion Gate at Mycenæ. He was in a rather aggressive, loud-voiced, domineering mood, and he stood in the midst of that marvellous stone kraal, the pre-Homeric walls of the house of the Atridæ, still talking of modern subjects—he was comparing the respective merits of British and American machinery—until I could see that all the party disliked him intensely—all except the Greek guide in whom the complete indifference of the explorer to the antiquities seemed to awaken a respect which he showed to no one else. But all this was changed soon afterwards.

I had left him, and had entered into a fascinating talk with my archæological friends, when I felt a hand placed within my arm from behind. Lund led me aside from the group, and we started off walking together towards the coast. The sea came in sight flashing under the deep blue sky, and a wind

from the East blew in our faces. Close by the shore we saw a grassy mound or barrow, and the waves were breaking amid sand, and close to the edge of the grassy coast. There was life and bustle in the landscape, and when Lund saw the coast, and a little inlet where a stream ran past the barrow or tumulus into the sea, he stretched out his hand towards it and pointed.

“ See ! ” he said with deep interest. “ It was here, and at spots such as this that the Asiatics landed, bringing with them the secrets and the treasures of the East. Here came the maidens from the Nile, daughters of Danaus, who first danced their sacred dance in such a meadow as that, beside the Argin stream, on the shores of Greece. And here came Cadmus from Egypt with his alphabet, and Ægyptus himself—Dionysius too, the Eastern God, with his troops of actors, with their long-sleeved Oriental robes, strange masks, and painted booths. It all came from over there—across the seas, across from the great mainland and heart of Asia to these far-off listening coasts of Greece.”

He pointed again across the flashing bay,

whilst the breeze blew in over its ruffled surface, and made the grasses round the old burial-mound nod in the sunlight. To my mind there came with the breeze a whiff of some far-off life, which had once been as brilliant and glorious as those waves which danced before our eyes, a life as full of colour as that of our own Middle Ages. I felt the atmosphere of the East, not the decayed East of to-day, but the East of some dawning period of history, teeming with incident and mystery, full of maritime energy and discovery, with a vernal freshness over all its doings, and with its hand outstretched to charm the Western isles and the coast of Greece into life and activity.

It came to my mind as we sat there on the grassy shore looking across the Ægean that this journey was indeed the most wonderful that any man had ever undertaken. Could it be that we were really travelling back through the past, through the ancient life of civilizations towards their source? Was the stream flowing back to the East where civilization had first appeared?

I turned to Lund and told him of my thoughts.

“ You once said to me, when I first met you and we talked in your rooms at Pinner,” I reminded him, “ that this eternal stream, which moves in harmony with all things, moved towards the source from which it originally came, and that in approaching its marge, and entering even in the slightest degree into its onward glide, we receive the impression of the earlier life and character of the earth, when she was nearer the source of creation. All that I have felt since we started on this wonderful journey has corroborated what you say. I seem to catch glimpses of a world which is more genuinely alive, because nearer the morning of its being, where the hours are longer, and more golden with sunshine, where time is not so rapid, nor so harsh and tyrannous in its stride, where the life of man is more like a broad and noble river, and less like a foaming cataract pent between torturing cliffs, and plunging downward into growing darkness and night—— But these are all similes and comparisons. How are we to find the



scientific theory which will cover these phenomena? Is it not possible for you to explain more exactly the law which lies behind it all?"

"Only by more similes," he said, rising to his feet.

We began to walk back again up the low hills towards the railway-station at Argos.

"You remember," he said, "that it was your task to find the scientific solution of these things. But we can use a simile as a working hypothesis to go upon. We might describe these happenings as the phenomena of attraction, a law of gravitation. Our surface sense of gravitation is a limited one. The true gravitation is in reality an infinite attraction which summons out all the deepest qualities of man's being as well as the essentials of his environment, and causes them to approach nearer and nearer to the great lodestar of life; so that, as the attraction intensifies, we enter more deeply into life, and feel its primal energies and clean wholesome tones more vividly than before."

We reached the top of the hills and paused

for a moment for a last look at the sea, before walking on inland upon a footpath we had struck.

“Or again,” he said, as we continued our walk, turning our faces inland, “you might describe these phenomena simply as an increase of light—not by comparing this force to a stream, or an attraction, but in terms of light. That’s how it sometimes occurs to me. All this colour and atmosphere that surround us now, for instance,”—he stopped and looked round again at the landscape—“the shape and beauty of the objects we look upon, all exist for the eye as phenomena of light and shade. I sometimes think that the ultimate swing and poise and balance of the universe into which my life has begun to be absorbed may be expressed simply in terms of an intensification of Light. As the light deepens, the morning of the world begins to dawn on my view, and through mine in some degree on yours. That heightened sense of a more conscious Nature which you yourself feel, of landscapes peopled with haunting and protective deities, and divine influences, of a life lived by beings other than

civilized man, of a world of softer winds. gentler hues, deeper and purer tones and colours—all this may be described simply as an increase of light, but this description will still remain a simile, and not the absolutely true statement of the facts.”

“And why is it,” I asked, “that here on the shore of Greece I receive an impression of the life of the East—its former life?”

“Simply because we are getting nearer the source and the goal of things, whether you call the force that moves us a stream, an attraction, or a reception of light. Civilization has moved Westward from the East. But we are now moving in a contrary direction to the trend of modern existence, and the light is rising, where it before was sinking; hence your feeling of the old vigorous life of the East in its hardy youth before the spirit moved on and left only the shell.”

As he said these words we had reached the railway-station at Argos, and we found our straw-hatted friends waiting on the platform for the train. One of their number, Savile by name, a tall and scholarly man from Cambridge, was working at a theory that the

Greek drama originated as a dirge performed at the tomb of a hero, and that solemn dances and a magic ritual underlay its forms. As we returned in the train, an interesting conversation took place. Savile was propounding his theory, and instanced the dirges performed at the tomb of Adrastus in Sicyon. It was a subject which appealed to me very much, as I had myself worked out a different theory to Savile's, and had published my views from time to time in the *Classical Review*. But now I was silent. For my thoughts were busy elsewhere. If it was true that Lund travelled in the manner that he asserted, in touch with the ultimate energy of all things, was there any physical proof to show this? Hitherto the only proofs had been subjective, or at any rate they could be explained subjectively. Was the sound that I had heard, and the sense of movement which I had felt, a real sound and real movement, or was it some effect on my imagination? I had not yet put this question to Lund and I waited for further proofs.

On the platform at Athens I said good-bye to my friends, and the next day Lund and I started on a Levant steamboat for Beirut. The sense of travelling easily and without fatigue, which I had noticed from the start, had continued. I am not a good sailor as a rule, but I never had a qualm on this journey. For some time I had questioned myself about this, and I was not able to decide in my own mind whether I could accept this far more than usual sense of ease and energy in the way we travelled as really related to the vast underflow of things which Lund claimed to have penetrated to, or whether it might not be simply the result of an unusually happy and buoyant condition of my own health. Certainly in crossing the *Ægean* now it was very noticeable. The motion of the ship was pleasant instead of disagreeable. There was a rhythm about the swing of the steamer, which curiously satisfied the mind, and made the head and eyes feel comfortable, instead of giddy and confused. Once again, too, the sea seemed a place of mystery. We passed a great number of islands. The weather was fine and still, and often we heard the

sheep bleating or cattle lowing on the islands when we were still far out at sea. Once at midday in the heat of a windless calm, there came a voice, very clear and still, pealing across the sea: it seemed to come from a green meadow under a forest which overhung a rocky island bay, but we could see no figure in the meadow, nor any sight of a peasant singing, which might have explained this voice. The sea in fact seemed full of sounds, as though sounds carried more easily than usual, and we were seldom out of ear-shot of land sounds as we crossed the *Ægean*, and passed along under the southern coast of Asia Minor. As we reached Cyprus, and were making the westernmost port, Limasol, with the coast slipping by on our port side, the air seemed troubled with the sweep of birds' wings, though none were visible. On the edge of the shore I saw a white temple, so exquisitely proportioned, it seemed to be shrinking back from our view, or to have risen that moment from the waves.

Reviewing the experiences of this part of the journey, I have no hesitation in saying



that the whole surrounding environments of sea, land, and atmosphere seemed to me more resolved; that is to say, impressions were simultaneously acuter and softer than usual, some hard, dull, non-conducting element in things had broken slightly, making sights and sounds more vivid without hardening their outlines and tones. And this I took to be the result of that more harmonious movement which Lund's journey represented, making itself faintly apparent on the surface.

I know that these will seem but slight and vague indications on which to base so vast a theory as that which I had embraced about my fellow-traveller. I questioned them myself at the time. It is only on looking back, after the unmistakable events of the conclusion of our journey, that I recognize without any hesitation at all the presence throughout the journey of that deeper impulsion of Nature which lay behind Lund's mode of travel. That this was not felt by others was simply due to the fact that they were not attuned to it. They had not experienced, like myself, that vital faith in and sympathy

with Lund, which, troubled as it was by doubts, had yet absorbed my being so radically, and constituted an invisible bond between us.

I did not talk to Lund on this journey. He was interested in an acquaintanceship he had formed on the steamer with Dr. Gastein, the celebrated mediævalist, whose collection of Troubadour ballads and Moorish and Saracen romances is famous. He was on his way to visit a Monastery on Lebanon, in order to see the manuscripts there. This was also our route. We were to land at Beirut, cross the Lebanon ridge to Damascus, and thence take the train to Aleppo, from whence the caravan routes to Bagdad and Persia start.

It was exciting to me to set foot for the first time in the Holy Land. There is a railway up to Damascus from Beirut, but we did the journey on mules by road, so as to see more of the country, and to accompany Dr. Gastein as far as the Monastery. It was a matter of breathless interest to me to land for the first time on the shores of Palestine, and to ride up into the historic Lebanon

range. I forgot for the moment everything but what I actually saw with my eyes. I had the guide-book with me, which I consulted constantly, wishing that I was more expert in the history and antiquities of these wonderful shores. The rocky hills, and walled and terraced slopes on which grew the vines and olives, and the mosque-crowned villages with their white walls and little domes and minarets, were teeming with associations.

We soon left the palms and vivid green irrigated fields and slopes of the seaboard behind, and climbed up into a more wild and desolate region, into the range of Lebanon. Fin Lund rode ahead with Dr. Gastein. In spite of my interest in the country, the sight of Dr. Gastein's white umbrella, and Lund's helmet and pugaree at the head of the string of mules (there were other tourists with us) disquieted me. I had had some talk with Dr. Gastein, who was of Jewish extraction, and had found him to be a man of immense learning and research. I became disquieted when I tried to realize what he would think of the terms on which I was

travelling with Fin Lund, how impossible it would be to bring home to him the meaning of our journey. Lund made absolutely no attempt to speak of it to any one but me. He was plying Dr. Gastein now with questions as to the Zionist movement, the future of the Jewish race, and its condition in various parts of the world.

Was it really true that this man was, as it were, travelling on the back of a comet? And that whilst the eyes and senses saw nothing more than two tourists riding on mules, one of them was moving in a manner which differentiated him from the whole of the rest of his kind? Staggering as it was to the mind, this yet chimed in with my own observation. I had always had a sense myself, though it was not apparently obvious to others, that Lund dwelt in a world by himself, and at a distance from the rest of his kind. I was constantly aware of this distance. There was, it seemed, an unbridgeable gulf between us, owing to the enormously greater depth of his experience. My faith in him was perhaps an effect of this, certainly

not an actual affinity of approximation between us.

As we reached the top of the range of Lebanon, and for the first time the vast waterless interior of Syria and Arabia revealed itself to our eyes in multitudinous grey shadows, and ridge on ridge of distant cliff and rock, this difference of Lund from the rest of the party became strongly marked in my eyes. His rugged face was instinct with vital force, and the keen air of mountain and desert, which palpitated all round us in the burning light, was reflected in the lithe vigour and wiry lines of his body. He seemed to move in a different focus and perspective from the rest. A lively conversation had been proceeding between Lund and Dr. Gastein about the future of the Jewish race, and its possible repatriation in the land of its origin. As we stood on the summit of the range of Lebanon, Dr. Gastein became eloquent on this theme.

“How this keen mountain air and light must have fed the spiritual vision of the great patriarch! In the inspired genius of Abraham, I see the beginning of all

the good that has come to the Western peoples ! ”

We had walked away from the path up on to a conical boulder-strewn hill from which the whole country was visible, lying around us like a raised model moulded out of clay. Behind our backs the Mediterranean was still just visible, flashing in the sun, in the spaces between the distant spurs and promontories of Lebanon.

Lund shaded his eyes and gazed eastward.

“ Yes, from over there came Abraham,” he said, “ moving hither westward from the East.”

“ A strange impulsion that,” said Dr. Gastein, “ which drove him to leave behind his kith and kin, and move hither from Ur of the Chaldees to these desolate hills.”

“ He moved northward and westward up the Euphrates on the eternal tide of things,” said Lund quietly.

“ It was the monotheistic idea which impelled him,” suggested Dr. Gastein, from the shade of his white umbrella, “ an idea which first originated in the mind of Abraham.”



Lund was standing beside a large boulder, which lay tilted on the brow of the ridge. He stood with one hand on it, and looked round and about him.

"That idea," he said at last, "and the movement and progress which seem to accompany it, is everywhere. It is the eternal stream which flows out and flows in, and flows on for ever. Even over there," turning and pointing to the deep blue haze of the Mediterranean on the western horizon, "even over there at Delphi its impulsions came, and in place of frenzied dreamer or soothsayer there spoke a sibyl or a poet. Down there too," pointing southward, "in Egypt, its message came like shafts of flame from the sun, and eternal laws of art and science arose, and when Abraham reached those wild regions down there on the little hill of Salem, he found it already established in the land—this monotheistic idea, as you call it, in the person of Melchizedek, timeless, ageless, eternal."

As Lund spoke these words, standing with his arms spread out beside the boulder, with Dr. Gastein's white umbrella close beside

him, and the other tourists, the dragoman and the mules, standing or sitting about on the brow of the hill, there came to me a momentary sense of some phenomenon that I had never been aware of before. It seemed to me that Lund's figure was in a literal sense "out of the picture." It stood forward and seemed to be separated from the others in a manner which was more vivid than a mere subjective sense of his intellectual and spiritual superiority. It was as if I could detect *two* pictures, one laid on the other, like two films thrown on the same screen. I seemed to be looking *through* something, and to behold Lund's figure as if prised out of its environment. There came a tremor, a flicker in the landscape, and I was impressed with a sense as of some enormous force beneath the threshold of my ordinary waking vision, on the crest of which momentarily the explorer's figure appeared. Whatever it was, nothing in the world, no earthquake, no volcano could have so impressed me with a sense of power, as did this apparition of Lund's person removed and separated from its ordinary surroundings.

Was this indeed the ultimate force and energy of Nature, which I had hitherto regarded agnostically, as unknowable? Had Lund really attained something new?

We rode on after this and found the Cistercian Monastery amongst some real cedars of Lebanon, which still are found growing on some parts of the ridge. Here we were entertained by the monks, and here we left Dr. Gastein, and rode on ourselves to Damascus, whence we took the train to Aleppo.

I mention this incident and the conversation on Lebanon because, though it may appear unconvincing to the reader as real evidence of the fact of Lund's movement with the main stream of universal force as it passes beneath the surface flow of our life, yet in my own mind it represents a landmark in my relations with the explorer. From this time forward Lund appeared to be separated from me by an impassable gulf. It was impossible for me to view him from an ordinarily human standpoint. I no longer doubted and questioned him, or sought to enter into

his thoughts. I merely watched and waited and obeyed his directions.

Aleppo is a centre from which start many trade-routes to the East. Lund and I joined a caravan bound for Bagdad, and after a night spent in the khan or caravanserai, our effects and baggage being already packed, ready to be slung on the camels, we set off at dawn one morning on our desert trek beside the bed of the Euphrates, eastward and southward toward Bagdad. This caravan ride was the *pièce de résistance* of our preliminary journey. It was three weeks before we reached Feludjeh, the little town on the Euphrates where Lund was to commence his survey of the river. The journey interested me greatly. The characters of the drivers and of the leader of the caravan were as picturesque and brightly coloured as all its other features. As it wound its way along, roughly following the course of the Euphrates, we passed through a country remarkable for its sweetness and wildness. Though not in the desert proper, the waterless sandy regions which stretch southward beyond the right bank of the river, it was *of* the desert, and the

proximity of the desert was the secret of its charm. We were on the fringe of it all the time, and every green thing, every blade of grass or patch of reeds or bush or tree, reflected the desert light, and its remoteness and mystery. It was above all the atmosphere which appealed to me, clear, wild and pure, beyond description. Day and night were equally beautiful. The nights with their glory of stars and moonlit mists hanging about the huge river-bed which was so often our companion, were to me as eventful and as full of a pure *joie de vivre* as the days. Never shall I forget the sense of the movement of the river, as it glided down between its wild banks, and the movement too of our caravan, of our tireless patient camels padding onward over the track, making splashes of fine dust at every step. They seemed to me the embodiment of tireless energy. In spite of the disjointed jostling and jolting that accompanies a camel's action, as its elastic neck swings to and fro and the rider's body is carried backwards and forwards in an unresponsive and unrhythmic manner, without that sympathy which should

exist between a horseman and his mount—in spite of all this I felt a curious underlying sense of the tireless indomitable energy and strength of the beast. It seemed to me that I traced in the swing and glide and ceaseless carriage to and fro of its neck and hump and sides, underlying even the surprised, injured and unwilling look of its countenance, the expression of some perpetually moving inexhaustible force, a self-contained stream of energy, which willy-nilly moved on for ever. The perception of this, and of a certain rhythm which accompanied it, entered into my own uneasiness and discomfort, soreness and stiffness, and took the sharp edge from them. So much so that after the first day or two I ceased to be tired at all.

Throughout this pleasant desert cruise, with all its interesting events and details, affecting both the mind and body with strong mood appeals, I was conscious of some continuous movement, an onward impetus as it seemed of camels, mules, and of the sliding river, which appeared all one movement. And this movement lay deeper than the actual swing of the camel's pace, or the hurry of the river



as it flowed on through its shallow channels. It lent to that surface movement a certain strength and ease, and a rhythm which harmonized all its otherwise effortful and unrelated passages. Could this be the onward sweep, the attraction, the suction of that mighty power which Lund claimed to have discovered? If so, this discovery was the most astounding and culminating of all the achievements of science.

I must mention here a curious obsession I had about the movement of the river, and also about the nature of the country through which it flowed.

The keynote, as I have said, of the character of this country was its desert aspect. There were scarcely any inhabitants, and sometimes the sand of the desert itself encroached upon and overflowed the banks of the river. Yet I constantly felt the suggestion of some richer, mellower land, burdened with teeming harvests of grain, and peopled thickly with a working population of villagers, spread far and wide over these great plains. Our caravan from time to time passed old water-wheels, big timber erections, worked by oxen,

used for hauling the water on to the land, and irrigating it by means of numerous little channels and sluices. But these signs of irrigation were mostly in ruins, deserted and forgotten. Nevertheless, there seemed to sound in my ears the tinkle of innumerable tributary riverlets flowing from and back again into the river. In my thoughts these streamlets were passing through the mazes of the corn in all directions, and their sound and movement and the creak and revolution of the water-wheels seemed to form one sound and one movement with the waters of the river. Those waters, too, appeared to me to be moving as one continuous flow, the whole river moving downwards past its banks to the sea as an almost solid thing, no one part of its waters faster than another. All this, as I say, was an obsession, impressed upon my inner mind, not visible to my eyes, which saw only the wilderness country with its signs of ruin and abandonment, and the shallow random flow of the river through its broad bed, covered here and there with beaches of shingle and clumps of tamarisk-bushes. This suggestion of a different river

was constantly present to me. I woke with it in the mornings. It seemed to come like a haunting fragrance blown along the desert air, mingled with the liquid arrowy light of the wilderness, or darting downward with the starlight from above. And the odd thing was that if ever in our journey we left the Euphrates, and returned to it again, I found when we were once more close to its waters, that those waters were flowing in an *opposite* direction to what I expected. It seemed as if I had a fixed idea of the movement of the river, as being in a contrary direction to that in which it actually flowed. Again and again I found that I had to correct myself about an error which the most elementary sense of direction should have avoided.

So curious was this phenomenon that I mentioned it one evening to Lund. We were bivouacking not far from where the camels lay under a grove of palms, whose inky boughs and foliage stood out like great black ostrich feathers against a sky crusted with diamonds.

"All that," he said, shaking his hand slightly, much as a man shakes his head,

rejecting other points of view that might try to suggest themselves, "is just a phenomenon of the way we are travelling. We are down deeper than that shallow-flowing Euphrates over there," pointing towards its banks, "which has shouldered its way through the desert, and which changes its course with the seasons almost. All that you see with the eyes is only the wreck and ruin of a world, with just a sweet fresh breath of memory blowing over it, like the spices from those shrubs. But you and I are travelling into the essential heart of things. So opposite is this direction and region in some ways—although not really opposite, for the core and kernel of things is not opposed to anything, not even to its own husk—yet so unused are our senses to anything but the external sweep of events and forces, that to travel down into their deeper currents and their more vital underlying streams, is to feel a sense of opposition, of moving in another direction to the apparent one. We are flowing *inwards*, you see, to a source, which to our limited senses, unaccustomed to anything but the outward flow, seems to be a contradiction."

This appeared to me to explain the disturbance in my sense of direction, and I then asked him about my experience with regard to the nature of the country through which we were passing.

"I have a curious sense," I said, "of a river that is no longer a desert stream, but the main artery of a great productive world. Can this be due to the greater richness and reality of that deeper stream, of which through you, and through my belief in you, I receive some indications?"

"It is due ultimately to that," he said, "and also to our being nearer the source of things. That stirs faintly in our consciousness a sense of the former conditions of these lands, when Mesopotamia was the granary of the civilized world. You are in closer touch with the old races which peopled these corn-growing plains, and gathered in its harvests for the great kings of those days."

There was a moment's silence. All round us the moonlight was so strong, it seemed to be an active power, performing a positive function.

"I sometimes realize," he said, his voice growing rather softer, "that it was in this deeper hidden current that Abraham's father, Terah, moved up the Euphrates, from ancient Ur of the Chaldees, the land of tombs and temples, near its sandy mouth, up to Padan Aram, the district we have now reached. He was a traveller and an explorer beyond what the world realizes. Six hundred miles and more his boats must have travelled, laden with his household goods, moving ever upwards, through the rich unending lanes of corn. He travelled as we travel, on the determined sweep of an irresistible force, upwards and outwards."

"And where are we going?" I said. "Where is this stream leading us? What is its goal?"

It was the question which had been in my mind ever since we started on our journey. Lund lit a cigarette with the ashes of our camp fire. He rarely smoked, but he did so occasionally when talking with me.

"We shall travel back," he said, "to the source of created things—to the point from which creation streams from the infinite."



But follow me carefully. This desert region round us is only as it were the wastage, the surplus of creation. I have struck the under-current. That pull of the universe, of which I am now conscious, will draw me to the point where this great stream, so to speak, buffets the crust of these sandy external wastes. I told you once that I was following a trail, tracing the spoor of life marked on a globe that is half dead and fossilized. That I told you was the secret of my many journeys. By following this spoor with the whole of my powers, I have conformed myself to the swing and movement of Nature, and I shall reach at last a goal. I shall reach the life of the earth, its end or its beginning, whichever you like to call it—that is to say, so far as charts and maps are capable of recording it.”

“Is this goal then some place marked on a map?” said I.

“Certainly,” he said, “or at any rate capable of being marked. The Hebrews recognized—did they not?—a certain spot on the earth’s surface as being nearer the origin and source of all things than any other

—a spot from which flowed out certain great streams to water the face of the whole earth,” and he spread out his hand towards the river-bed, which loomed darkly beside us.

My mind faltered at this.

“I believe the natives at Kurna,” I said, “at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, show tourists the Garden of Eden, and charge something for admission. But you cannot surely mean anything of that kind.”

He laughed.

“Yes, Strickland’s steamers will take you to the place,” he said, “but that is only a parody, like some other so-called sacred spots. What I mean to say is that down there,” he had risen to his feet, and pointed eastward and southward where the river-bed could be dimly seen stretching away through the night, “down there in the district which tradition itself has indicated, I shall reach that point which is nearer than any other to the earth’s beginning. But we will talk no more of it now. We will, to use the words of your Prime Minister, ‘wait and see.’ ”

He walked a little way through the grove,

and ducking his head, crawled into his light-weight tent, leaving me possessed partly by wonder, partly by the opposite of wonder, doubt.

A day or two later we met the representative of the Persian and Levant International Transport Company. He was a German, of course, although the company was ostensibly a Turkish one. His head was shaved to within an ace of his scalp, he was fat, discontented and rather ill from the heat. He could not understand the small amount of baggage and equipment that we had brought. He had hired for us more boats and boatmen than we needed. Lund refused to take more than one boat and two boatmen, which was indeed all that we required. But most of all this German semi-official objected to me. Lund apparently had not mentioned me in his correspondence with the company, and when the German discovered that I was English, his anger was so apparent for some minutes that Lund and I could not help laughing. Inconvenient as it might be to the official to have to explain my presence to

his superiors, he had no power to prevent my going with Lund. He contented himself with taking down a multiplicity of particulars about myself, including my religion and my mother's maiden name.

It was perfectly evident at the time to me that Lund was really employed by the German Government, but later on, when our journey became the subject of questions in the House of Commons and the Reichstag, responsibility for it was disclaimed on all sides. To the last it was never clear what the P. & L.I.T. Company was. Lund did not seem himself to know, or to trouble his head about it. It was to him merely the external tool of a journey, which in all its other aspects was of infinitely deeper importance and significance. If it had endangered the peace of Europe—and at one time it figured discernibly on the diplomatic horizon—it would, I think, have left him quite unmoved. So complete was his absorption into the essential journey, quite apart from its occasion and its accidental surroundings.

## THE EUPHRATES JOURNEY BEGUN

Then began our journey down the Euphrates. Lund at once got to work on his map. The survey which from this point he carried out, including the whole course of the Euphrates from Feludjeh up to the point where he disappeared and left me, is a most remarkable work, and though intended for the German Government, in the upshot of these events it never got further than our Foreign Office, where I myself deposited it. He made this survey with the aid of the existing charts, simply sitting in the forepart of the boat, under an awning, and sketching in the course of the river, mapping its bends and wide sweeps, as we sailed or floated past them, with his instruments placed on a chair at his side, and paper pinned out on a small table in front of him. He at once became deeply engrossed in this task, and for the rest of the time that he was with me, except for the last three days, he worked at it incessantly—day and night, for at night he used to fill in the sketch and amplify it, revising

and verifying his calculations and observations.

Many remarkable things occurred during this boat journey which we now commenced, all of them corroborative of those remarkable facts, invisible to the outer eye, with which Lund claimed to be in touch. I was now intensely on the watch for proofs of the theory, but for the first few days, I noticed nothing. We merely drifted with the stream, or utilized such breezes as there were, with the tall triangular sail of our felucca. It was extremely pleasant to have left the caravan, and to be on the water. The country round was flat. On the shores and inland we could see every now and then the big water-wheels, with clay buckets used by the natives for lifting the Euphrates waters on to their cultivated plots ; and clumps of handsome palms, with fine, dark, curving boughs and short squat trunks, clustered here and there in the neighbourhood of the villages. The intense light cast the most magnificent stray shadows amongst the trees and mud buildings of the farms, and the vivid green of the fields made the occasional proximity of



villages splendid in colouring. On the whole the district was well cultivated. We kept out in the swing of the stream, and at night simply beached the boat on a patch of shingle, and slept in the open air. Our two boatmen were Arabs. One of them stood in the stern, leaning on the steering oar, throwing his weight first on one side, then on the other—a tall imposing-looking man with his white robes bound round and round his loins, and the sun shining on his arms and legs—a more picturesque figure it would be difficult to imagine. The other came as cook and generally useful servant. When not engaged about the boat, he sat under the mast, looking up at the sail with a grin which never came off his face and seemed as much a part of it as his sun-blackened complexion.

It was on the third day after our start down-stream that the first of those unaccountable phenomena began—unaccountable, that is to say, on any other hypothesis than that which Lund himself explained to me afterwards. It was due, he said, to the apparent opposition between the surface

stream and the deeper stream on which we moved.

“This deeper movement,” he said, “is sweeping us on, and sometimes—but only sometimes—the physical senses revolt against moving in so radical and powerful a manner, and a struggle follows, but it passes off. Remember,” he added, “we have behind us the indestructible vigour and balance of things, and however roughly these little brain-cells of ours may be handled, and our nerve-tissues suffer, nothing in reality can harm us.”

Certainly the experience was a nerve-racking one. I don't think I have ever before or since endured similar pain. And it was nameless suffering—difficult to describe, apparently without an assignable cause. It began one very calm morning. We were floating with the stream. There was nothing to disturb the water. The wind had dropped, and the sail of our boat, which rose like a great soaring wing above us, was quite lifeless and dead. Nevertheless I began to feel as if the boat were labouring in her course. Her timbers trembled slightly, as though

some strong undercurrent were drawing across her keel, and blunting our onward movement. I looked hastily over the side for the cause, but there was no disturbance of the water and no wind. The reflection of our tall sail wriggled as before on the surface of the river with nothing to break it. Only I felt as if our keel were sagging against some great pressure of water, which tugged and jostled at it down below. I looked at Lund, and fear suddenly shot into my mind. He had lowered his head, his eyes were shut, and his brow was very firmly knit. His lips were blue, and there was a look of great tension and suffering in his forehead. His head was bowed, it seemed to me, as if to meet some great blast of mental or possibly physical pain, as a man bends his head in a gale of wind. At the same time the boat began to behave in a manner that can only be described as horrible. Strange hard vibrations passed through her timbers, the water gurgled across her bows with sudden rushes. She trembled exactly as a stick trembles in the hand which holds it in a strong current of water. Every one who has sailed knows how a boat behaves

when the tide is racing swiftly and the wind blows freshly across the current. She seems to shudder and groan, hesitating thrills and shocks run through her, now she leaps forward, drawing over the surface of the waves with a rush, and now she hangs motionless whilst the waves spin past her, like a spirited horse fighting against the mesmeric but iron control of the bit. It is all due to the subjection of the boat to *two different forces*, the wind and the tide, which pull in contrary directions. Exactly in that way our boat shuddered, and seemed to be in the grip of some deeper suction. The effect on the nerves was almost unbearable, whilst to the outer eye nothing extraordinary was apparent. I looked at our two boatmen. The tall Arab in the stern was leaning on his oar, gripping it nervously with both hands. He was quite motionless, but the whites of his eyes were showing as he rolled them round uneasily. The grin of the man sitting under the sail had frozen into an unpleasant fixity, and he looked sea-sick and suffering. I do not think that they experienced the tension as much as I did, and, as for the moment there was no

assignable cause to this horrible sense of strain and labour in the boat, they were silent.

I rose and touched Lund on the shoulder, and he turned and glanced at me for an instant. In his eyes I read a look of fixity, courage, and resolution which startled my whole being. I read in his brow a nameless agony which appalled me, and yet I saw that he was master of it, and that I must do nothing and ask no questions until he had come through it.

How long this condition lasted I do not know. Only the tension seemed to increase ; and then suddenly the tall steerer let go of his oar. He took two strides forward, and caught hold of the mast, as if he were giddy ; the other boatman buried his face in his hands.

The moment afterwards the strain relaxed as suddenly as it had begun. Fin Lund got up from the table, and turned to me with a quiet smile. He said nothing, but went to the Arab and pushed him back again towards the steering oar. The man obeyed. The colour of his face was changed ; he was

shaking all over with fright. All the time none of us said a word. Lund went back to his table, and went on with his work. We turned a bend in the river, and met a light breeze, which came breathing across from the left bank, scented with the spices in which these regions abound.

All was pleasant again, only it seemed as if we had passed through some dark torture-chamber of the soul, a breathless vacuum region hard to describe, subjected to the pressure of countless atmospheres.

Then the Arabs began to talk. Not one word could we understand, but they talked all the rest of the evening, and never a laugh between them; nor any argument or difference. One could tell without knowing the language that they had some common idea as to the cause of the phenomenon, upon which they vehemently agreed. I would like to have known what it was, but whatever it was, it did not seem to satisfy them. Even when we were encamped somewhat later at sunset, their talk kept breaking out again. One of them was blowing up a fire, holding his hand against his beard to protect it from



the sparks. He would stop in the task, to carry on the conversation, kneeling up on his knees. Late on into the night we heard them talking.

And I, too, discussed with Lund the meaning of these extraordinary events. He gave me the explanation I have already stated.

"Remember this," he added, "the dislocation between the two movements is only in appearance. In reality they are in accord with one another, but our senses are unaccustomed to it, and it troubles them. These fellows had a real fright," he said, nodding towards the Arabs, whose white robes we could see glimmering as they sat talking by the water's edge.

An unfathomable depth of blue night enveloped us all, the river, our boat, and camp, and the dark tamarisk-bushes which grew in the river-bed.

"Where are we going?" I asked Lund.  
"What does it all mean?"

"Only what I've told you," he said quietly.

"And the antagonism—this sense of strain, the opposition of outward things to the

inner—shall we suffer from it again? Will it recur?”

“Probably,” he answered, with a smile, “only remember, as I said before, whatever the outward trouble, we are nearer the ultimate harmony, and consequently stronger and safer.”

Next day, it did occur again, quite soon after we had started. It began just as before with a throbbing vibrating sense in the timbers of the boat, and it speedily grew worse and worse. I felt as if the boat were subjected to the pressure of an ice-pack, which was grinding upon itself in every direction at once with shattering shocks and jerks.

This time our Arab boatmen would not stand it. With cries and curses they leapt into the water, and swam for the shore.

I lay beside the gunwale of the boat, wondering how long it would be before I too followed them. Every nerve in my body cried out to me to do so. Yet all the time the air and the water and the boat were outwardly still and quiet. It was only beneath the surface that something seemed to

be tearing at the vitals of our craft, and threatening to grind its timbers to pieces.

For some time I endured the agony in silence. I saw the boatmen, who were good swimmers, reach the bank. The clearness of the sky, and the easy swing of some birds which I saw lazily flapping their wings close above the bank were all fraught with the nervous pain and tension which I was enduring, and which seemed to me far worse than it had been the day before.

And then it passed again, and there was something about Lund's smile, as he looked up wearily from his table, something great and exalted about it, which ought to have rewarded me for my sufferings. But I was still quivering with the strain and with fright.

"How often are we to suffer this kind of thing?" I said. "This method of travel is more than flesh and blood can endure."

"I don't think it will ever be so bad again," he said. "It goes no deeper than our senses can reach. Where they end, the pain ends. We touched bottom that time, but you see we are not a scrap the worse for

it. We are overcoming it, and we shall soon make light of it."

It was quite true that we were none the worse for it. In fact in a very few minutes all my distress had gone, and something like ease had entered my heart. I scarcely dared to move for fear the horrible disturbance should recommence, but as I looked across the wide spaces of the river and its bed in the wilderness there seemed something akin to music in the air, and the flap and sweep of the birds' wings above the bushes on the shore brought me comfort, and the least sound, such as the soft draught of the oars through the water, or the most distant creaking of a water-wheel, sounded exquisitely in my ears.

This beauty lasted all the day. Our two boatmen had fled for good and all. I took the steerage oar, and guided our course down the centre of the stream. A vista of low purple hills appeared in the distance, and one or two islands drew up close to us, and passed again, as we sailed and floated swiftly onwards. Soon I felt that the painful experience had been worth it ; I was ready to face

it again courageously, my faith in Lund and my affection for him were stronger than they had ever been before.

Life for several days after this was very pleasant to me, and we had no repetition of the strain arising from travelling in the deeper flow of things. Although it did occasionally occur again, it was not often, and I felt, as Lund said, that we were masters of it. It was not in fact more than a peculiar kind of sickness, comparable to that, for instance, which seizes people in intensely high altitudes. I shall not mention it again in these pages.

I have now to record certain things which I saw, which will not be easily believed. How far these things were real, I shall not attempt to define. Although I believe myself, and Lund certainly believed, that they were hallucinatory, yet they belonged to a consciousness which was not purely subjective, not simply my own or Lund's. It seemed that this wondrous stream, which lay deeper than the immediate grasp of the senses, as it flowed backward to its source, caused a resuscitation of past experience, in some general nature-

consciousness, faintly stirring and bringing up to the surface, like bursting bubbles, age-long buried layers of experience—much as the blood rushing over the brain in a peculiar way is said to release memories and images of the past. So this mighty stream began to stir into existence, and release to the surface once more the sights and sounds of former ages of the river's life.

It was after we had begun to notice some of the many ruins of an almost prehistoric civilization which are so common in these parts that these phenomena began.

On one or two islands I noticed the remains of ancient brick fortifications, and on obtaining leave from Lund to land, I discovered to my intense interest a few of these clay bricks stamped with the cuneiform writing, with which some of our museums are now replete.

What we actually saw, however, presented itself to our minds with such an amazing appearance of reality and of actual life, that these sights bore very little relation to any of the relics of those past civilizations with which we are familiar from our museums.



The first phenomenon of the kind happened as follows.

It was towards evening and there was a breeze blowing sufficient to keep me busy at the steerage oar, and with the manipulation of the sail, at which double duty I had become rather skilful since our boatmen had left us. At the same time, so far as I could spare any of my attention, it was given to the sight of some ruins which we were approaching at a bend of the river. I could see quite plainly the bastions of what I judged must at one time have been a city wall jutting into the river-bed. They rose above the dark bushes that grew in the dry and broken channels, and were plainly visible overtopping them in the level evening light. It appeared to me as if the remains had once been strong squat towers and forts built of brick, past which the river had flowed. As we neared them, and turned the promontory on which they stood, I suddenly gave an exclamation of surprise and pleasure. For I saw not far off in front of us a bridge of boats, of a kind I had never seen before. As we drew nearer, I saw plainly the great

barges, looming above the water, amid the evening shadows. I also heard the ripple of the water round them, and the splash and creak of the hawsers as the wind drew the great swinging chain of boats up against the breeze. Then with unexpected rapidity we seemed to be close up to them, and I suddenly hurled all my weight on the steerage oar to put the boat about. As we went about (and in doing so I had to turn most of my attention to the boat), I yet saw quite close above me a man standing on the bridge, in a long straight garment reaching to his feet. His mouth was wide open, as if he were shouting at us, yet I heard no sound coming from it. When I had got the boat about, and was making up and across the stream with the aid of the breeze, I looked round again at once, and to my astonishment and chagrin saw nothing but certain dark shadows and patches on the water. I had waked, it seemed, from a foolish day-dream, and I turned the boat down-stream again.

All this time Lund had said nothing, although I called out to him to look at the barges. But he only shook his head and

smiled. I looked hastily toward the bank. The ruins were real at any rate. I could still see them sleeping there by the river's edge in the evening light. And then I saw that farther on, beyond these brick ramparts there were several mounds of sand. These mounds of sand are not infrequent, and are caused by deposits of dust blown over what were once towers and streets. I now saw that there were people sitting on these mounds. It was a most curious sight. They seemed to have gathered there to watch us go by. There were four mounds in all rising out of the desert, for at this particular spot the sand of the desert reaches up to the river. What these people were doing there, and why they sat so still, I could not say, but something prompted me this time to sail right on, past them, although I kept my eyes fixed hard on the strange groups seated on the mounds. One man stood on the edge of the river, into the waters of which he was gazing intently. When we had passed out of sight of the place, I went up to Lund, who had continued sketching all the time.

"What were those people?" I asked him.

“Pay no attention to them,” he said. He was taking an observation at the moment with one of his instruments, and as he spoke, he continued to work at his plan of the river. “You and I are pursuing a more substantial goal than those dreams. They are nothing,” and he applied his eye again to his sextant and compass.

“But they have some significance,” I said, “they belong to the phenomena of your theory of travel and movement. They are evoked somehow by the undercurrent. How do you explain them?”

He put down his instruments for a moment, and passed his fingers over the paper on which he was sketching.

“This old river,” he said, smiling, “‘this ancient river, the River Euphrates,’ is what you might call a kind of sink into which old disused portions of the world’s history have settled down, and come to a dead standstill, much as sand silts up in a channel. These past ages of history lie round us now invisible to the eyes, but not less present in reality than the stone and brick buildings which were once the scene of their existence—such

as that old place we passed just now," pointing up the river behind us. "Now don't you see," he turned towards me with one hand clasping the gunwale of the boat firmly, the other used to emphasize his thought, "as we pass through these surroundings, always nearing the ultimate source, and ever more closely in touch with the real energy of things, even these ghosts of the past become once more faintly apparent? So vigorous and real is this amazing undercurrent of the world's life, that even the earliest strata of history which have remained buried for ages in this channel must for a time be galvanized into some appearance of life."

"But that life is not real?" I asked.

"No, not even though our senses may sometimes be deluded," he said; "these apparitions only *mimic* life, appear to move for a few brief moments with the life they once had, and possess a kind of quasi-being, but they are in reality dead—mere husks and shells. They do not properly belong to my theory of travel. They are only waste products of creation's energy as it renews itself at its own source."

He went back to his map, and I remained leaning on my oar, and pondering on his explanation. I believe that what he said was the correct view. Anyway, whatever the theory, the facts were that during the rest of our journey Lund and I saw many ghosts, as many almost as appeared to Ulysses beside the River Cocytus.

In obedience, however, to his injunction to pay no attention to these appearances, I shall not do more than set down one more such instance.

It happened the evening after passing the ruined city—which I believe to have been the City of Thapsacus—when we were encamped beside an ancient dyke which stood on the bank of the river. These dykes are a feature of this neighbourhood—bulwarks, built of brick, to hold the river in its course, some of them said to be as old as Semiramis. The whole plain of Mesopotamia abounds with relics of this kind. From our bivouac on a spit of sand by the river's edge we had seen the broken lumps of brickwork emerging from the bushes for some distance along the sweep of the river-bed; and we had followed



them up some way. Whilst inspecting them, we came across a kind of causeway or brick platform, which ran up from the river, over the dyke and on to the plain beyond. This broad road or flooring on the river's bed, I took to be the remains of a ford passing over the dyke. The night was warm. I fetched my blankets and lay down to rest at last under this wall of brick. Before closing my eyes I saw the stars shining very large and bright just above the black summit of the wall. When I awoke, the river was red in the early dawn. There had been some wind, and I think it must have been distant dust-clouds which turned the dawn so crimson. The brickwork of the old dyke was on fire. I never saw so blood-red a morning, and the desert too was red. On the horizon these wisps of red dust were creeping murkily across the sky, and standing by the dyke I saw a man. I could see the upper half of his body above the bushes, and his great square black beard, and the belt below it, bound, not round his waist, but round his breasts. He remained motionless, and I began very cautiously to climb the brick dyke behind me,

in order that I might see this figure more clearly. When I reached the top, however, I could no longer see the figure amongst the dark bushes, perhaps because it was no longer silhouetted, as I was now above it, and I climbed down again to go in search of him. I pushed my way through the bushes, glancing about me everywhere, making my way towards a bit of higher ground where we had noticed the brick platform or causeway the night before. I scrambled up with as little noise as possible, until I stood on a level with this old road, as it seemed to be, with its broken ruined flooring, out of which grew flowering weeds, and here and there myrtle-bushes with their stiff pointed leaves. And there, standing in the middle of the causeway, I saw the most startling sight that I think I have ever beheld. Two horses with plumed heads stood side by side, one a white Arab, the other dark, and behind them was a small light chariot, with solid wooden wheels. Two men stood upright side by side in the car, motionless like the horses. Above their heads two spears pointed upwards to the sky, from which I noticed that the stars had

not quite faded, although the eastern horizon was burning like a furnace. For a few moments I watched them. The hair and beard of the man on the side nearest me were plaited, and on his back was a big quiver-box, from which protruded strong red and blue feathered shafts. As I looked, the chariot moved. The wheels went round, the figures swayed slightly, and I distinctly heard the feathers on the arrows scrape against the man's back. There was something curious about the movement of that chariot. At one moment the picture presented to the eye was the embodiment of strength and power. In the stiff upright forms of the men, and the grip of their horses' hoofs biting the brick-work and the splendid sinews of their outstretched legs, I saw the balance and power of a grand fighting machine. The wheels of the car revolved, and it passed onward, till I saw it for a moment against the rising sun on the slightly domed summit of the broad dyke. It was magnificent, the appearance of the two warriors in their dark, straight, close-fitting tunics reaching down towards their feet, and the spear-heads flaming above

them, and I could see the muscle standing out rigidly across the arm of the driver as he held his horses in a grip of iron—and then, I did not know whether to laugh or cry, for I *knew*—it seemed to be written all over them—that these strange beings were dead and unreal, merely aping and mimicking life with a kind of hope, worse than despair, of inducing me to believe in them. I think perhaps it was the movement of the chariot more than anything which disillusioned me. It was unconvincing. The motion was not perfectly continuous, but was more like a series of pictures, in reality motionless, but presented rapidly to the eye with a view to producing an appearance of movement and life. I walked boldly up the causeway, my boots ringing cheerfully on the bricks, and, as I expected, I saw nothing of them when I reached the top. Only I saw the river, like a pool of blood, or rather a chain of pools, stretching away league on league into the farthest distance.

I sat down on the top of the dyke. Where was this river leading us? Was it true that under its surface flowed the river that moves

with all life, and leads into the everlasting soul of things? Had this restless traveller and world-wanderer really penetrated into it, and was he moving swiftly on with it? Was it really true that that stream was so living and real that even the dead shadows of the past stirred into a fictitious life, as we two went by in our boat past the shadowy shores of this outer world?

I looked away to where our boat was beached, and I saw Lund himself seated at his table. Strange—his electric lamp was burning. It shone like a little star even yet, in the shadow of the bank, though the sun was rising. He had been at work all the night, intent upon his task of mapping the river's course! Was it a contradiction that one whose heart and mind were settled so deep in the eternal underlying force of Nature, should yet work with such almost infinite patience and pains at the surface details around him, verifying all the observations of previous cartographers, and producing a more truthful and reliable map than any that had hitherto been made? Was this a contradiction, or was it the natural outcome

of his greater grasp on reality ? As I watched him, his light went out with a wink. I could see his figure in the growing light of day, moving hither and thither about the boat. I scrambled down over the ruins to the water's edge, and found him in the best of spirits, shaking out a clean shirt which he had washed the night before, and anxious to be off as soon as possible.

A few days later we reached Hillah, a modern town which stands near the site of the ancient Babylon. It is in fact largely built of bricks from the ruins of that place. The ruins lie in huge mounds and heaps of rubbish in the sandy plains close by. There is a good deal of life about the town of Hillah. A trade in silk, carpets, and spices flourishes between this town and Kurna at the junction of the Tigris, and with Basra and the Persian Gulf.

Here we met the Turkish Governor. He was expecting us, and he was anxious to help us, and especially to supply us with new boatmen. This offer Lund was unwilling to accept, saying that we could do everything



for ourselves. This astonished the Turk, until he suddenly grasped that I was an Englishman, upon which his sense of humour asserted itself, and that we should wash and cook for ourselves appeared to him exquisitely characteristic of the feverish energy of the West. He spoke German, a language which he seemed to have acquired very recently. He was fat and dirty, and wore a blue uniform, and on his head an imposing fez. He took us down the squalid main street of Hillah, and ordered coffee in one of the bazaars. Here we sat smoking cigarettes, and discussing the remainder of our route.

“The country down there,” said the Turk, waving his fat little dirty hand towards the river, “is all marshes. You know it, Herr Lund—the Lemlun marshes—the ancients called them the Paludes Chaldaici—where they say the Garden of Eden once was.” He sat back in his chair, and laughed lazily.

“There is some good land there?” said Lund.

“It is all deserted,” said the Turk. “The country is a big pond—as big as Egypt—nothing but Euphrates water and mud and

jungle. Yes, they say there are tracts of firm land with fine timber, but no one has ever seen them. The natives are degenerate, they belong to the days of Noah and the flood," and he laughed again with a sly oily laugh. "But when you get down to Basra," he added, with a wink, "you will be in civilization again. There are pretty Arab girls at Basra—oh, 'all right,' you know."

"And at Kurna they show you the Garden of Eden?" I said.

"Oh yes, with the Tree of Knowledge and all," he said, lighting another cigarette. "I bet you, gentlemen," he went on, "that some day England, France, Deutschland, all the nations of the world, will fight for the Edensgarten—and it is only a swamp," and he laughed his long easy Oriental laugh.

I confess that my nerve had been a good deal upset by the occurrences of this boat voyage of ours. I know that I ought to have put aside the strange and melancholy thoughts which came to me, as those unreal apparitions presented themselves again to my memory. But I could not do so. They

besieged my mind involuntarily. When we were afloat again I could not throw them off. The country through which we passed was fairly well cultivated, but in spite of the villages, and the little rectangular patches of flax and rice, and an occasional tower built of mud, surmounting the courtyard of a farm, the land presented to my eyes an appearance of abandonment and ruin. Nowhere else in the world, I think, are so many ruins to be seen, the remains faintly discernible of grand irrigation works, canals now choked with sand, dykes and sluice-gates, nothing now but chunks of broken brickwork, still held together by the bituminous mortar which outlasts the ages. To my eyes it was all sad, haunting and haunted. It oppressed my spirit with a crushing weight. The taste for archæology had left me. Only I felt the pity, almost the despair, of death and decay. I know that this weakness, which I could not shake off, separated me more than ever from my companion, and made it less possible than it had ever been that I should really follow him, and successfully interpret his life. I believe Lund, too, realized this, had already realized

it some time before. Anyway he made few attempts to explain things further to me. Furthermore, I must try now to express the phenomenon, the mystery, about this man's personality which, throughout the latter part of our journey, impressed me more perhaps than all the wonders which I saw and felt.

It was this. I became aware that Lund himself was no longer with me. The real man had passed out of the realm of my perception. It was not that he appeared absent, distrait, absorbed in profound contemplations of things invisible. There was nothing trance-like about his condition, as in the case of a fakir or holy man, who becomes oblivious of his material surroundings and impervious to ordinary sense perceptions. On the contrary, he was "all there," quick and active and brusque in his movement, absorbed apparently in the work which he had in hand, and working indeed as I have never seen a man work before. His sleep had been reduced almost to nothing. Every evening, after we were encamped and had got our meal—and he always did his share of the physical work—he would get

out again the rough sketch sheets of the map which he had drawn during the day in pencil, and would work the whole thing over again, verifying calculations, inking over the pencil-lines in various coloured inks, and writing in names and soundings. It was a colossal work. Often I fell asleep, whilst he still sat at his table under the stars, with his electric light shining on the chart, and when I woke again hours after dawn, would find him still at work.

The chart was so voluminous that at Basra, where I had a number of leather cases made for it, the thing weighed over 30 lb., there being in all 247 sheets. This was the fact which mystified our Foreign Office more than anything else, and rendered my explanation of the affair more difficult than anything, because my statement that the map was Lund's own work during the twenty-nine days of our journey down the river, between Feludjeh and the spot where I lost him, was never credited by any one for a moment. It was impossible, they said, for six months' work to be done in one month. The calculations alone and their comparison with the

existing charts took the staff of the Government Department to which the work was entrusted over two months to verify.

It is undoubtedly the most wonderful map that has ever been made. Yet all the while, during those days of unremitting labour and extraordinary mental vigour and accuracy, the man's real soul, his essential being and mind, were elsewhere. He was not with me. He was not on the surface of things. There was a gulf between us. He was travelling in just the way that he had explained to me. His faculties had pierced beneath the surface, and were living and moving in harmony with the absolute accuracy and precision of Nature's essential movement and ultimate life.

I know that the inner eye of the man contemplated a far more wondrous river than the old Euphrates with its melancholy time-ridden shores. I know that he saw the stream of things, which the Greek philosopher was reaching after, and felt the motion of the eternal sea of being, towards which and from which all lesser currents flow.

And hence the observation of the physical



Euphrates was a secondary and easy matter, the essential *ideal* river being seen by him. His wonderful energy and his joy in travel had pierced through to the so-called "unknowable," which lies behind and causes the phenomena of the senses.

As this man's personality and aims become gradually better known in the world, I believe that this will be written down as the greatest achievement of an explorer that has ever been made in the history of the world.

I was unworthy of it.

I think he knew this soon after we started. He was never unkind to me, or critical or reproachful, but he recognized that I could not follow him, that the energy and intensity of his life were beyond me, and that his hope that I might be able in some way to live up to him, and interpret him to the scientific world, was to be disappointed. My absorption in the mysticism of the Euphrates, in the shadows of the past, which were so strangely stirred by his presence, my depression and sadness of heart at the wrecks and ruins of the ancient world that lay around

our course, were all alike uncongenial to him. This more than anything, I think, prevented my following him more thoroughly.

I knew it at the last. When that marvelous rift in the texture of earth took place, and I saw for one instant the enormous produce of creation's workshop, and its liberty and joy, into which he entered, I knew how vain and wasted had been my regrets for dead things, and all my doubts and fears. Lund travelled on. I remained behind because of my weakness, and because I looked back so much.

#### THE END OF THE JOURNEY'S STORY

The end of this strange journey came suddenly—suddenly, that is, to me. I was unprepared for it. I did not realize how far Lund had travelled since we first met and conversed on this wonderful theme. In fact, throughout the journey, I saw only the faintest indications of what was really taking place. All I know for certain is that what I did see and notice, corresponded with and exactly corroborated his statements to me,

and were, for me, a sufficient proof of all that he said. But how shall I, having nothing but these faint surface indications to relate, convince others of the great events which they pointed to? From the movement of a single blade of grass you can tell the direction of the wind, and so must it be with the events which followed from this point in our journey up to the moment of Lund's disappearance. They can do no more than just adumbrate in a vague way those events of world-wide importance of which Lund's departure was the sign. The real essence of the journey took place in a region beyond the reach of the senses.

On the third day of our journey after leaving Hillah we entered upon the great marsh district north of the junction of Tigris and Euphrates, known as the Lemlun marshes. Here the river loses itself in a labyrinth of pools and swamps. It overflows the whole district, and all this swamp region is for the most part unexplored. It presents itself to my recollection as a wilderness of papyrus-grass, growing out of the shallow lagoons and

swamps. The papyrus-grass is a sad whitey-grey colour, and the impression of these huge marshes, almost boundless in extent, is exceedingly desolate and lonely. It is perhaps the most deserted-looking of all inhabited countries in the world. For it is inhabited here and there by a few villages of marsh-dwellers, whose little houses are perched in clusters above the water in a few spots, like the nests of water-fowl. The existing maps of the river leave the greater part of this lake region untouched. The course of the river becomes difficult to trace, losing itself as it does in a vast chaotic region of standing water and swampy ground.

Into this region I pushed the boat, following Lund's directions, making my way along the interminable channels of the fens, between the silent lanes of grey papyrus-grass, sometimes emerging into open spaces of bright blue water, which reflected the fierce light overhead, or creeping round ferny promontories and islands overgrown with water-weeds. There was not a sound in the air, except the occasional beat of a bird's wings, splashing along the surface of the water,

or rustling amongst the cane-stalks of the papyrus.

How strange it was that in the midst of such scenes as this, there came to my mind an impression of something different, something indeed the opposite of all this watery wilderness, where nothing seemed to have happened since the beginning of time. I noticed this impression the day after we entered the region. I felt as if we were close to the scene of some operation or activity of great magnitude. There was a stir in the air. The rustling of millions of papyrus-stalks, whenever an occasional breeze stirred them, had an expectancy in it, as though these pipings of Pan were the prelude to some greater symphony of sound, far off still, but approaching. There came to my mind the recollection of a busy mill beside a green stream which I had known and visited as a child, and I remembered how everything in the mill, floors, doors, and ceilings, used to throb and beat with the revolution of the wheels, as the leather bands slipped swiftly round, and the big wheel outside dipped in the stream. Just in that way it seemed to

me that this strange wild region was throbbing with life. I could almost fancy that I heard distantly the murmur of great workshops. There was a bustle in my mind like that which one feels, for instance, on visiting the London dockyards, and I thought of populous cities, where a million different activities are taking place simultaneously, and great masses of men are striving at different tasks. Yet—how shall I express it?—this sense of life and bustle in the air was something much *softer* than anything I ever knew in a human workshop or factory. The rumour of it came over the fields of papyrus, and along the winding pools of water, and mingled naturally with the rustle of the grasses and the ripple of the lakes. If it was the sound of machinery which I seemed to hear in the air, it was machinery delicate and vast enough to weave those distant mists, and build those ladders of light which the sun drew up on the horizon of the fens. Furthermore, the sound, as I say, was fraught with a sense of the occurrence of a great action. Events of importance and significance seemed to be taking place, contrary



to all expectation, in this world of water and reed. What it was, I could not tell, but the impression was so strong that I spoke of it to Lund.

“I have a presentiment,” I said, “which has filled my mind all day. I feel as if events of great importance were taking place here or somewhere in the world. I shall almost expect that the newspapers, when we reach Basra, will be full of occurrences, likely to have far-reaching results. I feel as if things were happening, I cannot tell why.”

Lund had been working harder than ever at his map, since entering this unexplored district, but he stopped working now, and listened. I shrugged my shoulders as I finished speaking, looking round at the watery waste about us. We were just emerging into a stretch of bright glassy water, blue for the most part, but here and there round the islands and reeds flashing like molten gold under a powerful sun. Lund's face was calm, but as he looked at me, his eyes were burning. The reflection on the water was not stronger than the light in them.

"You are right," he said at last, "events of great importance are happening in this wild region and about to happen. But they will not be recorded in the newspapers. The world's greatest events do not appear in the papers. Have you not understood what this journey is which we are taking together?"

The tall grey grasses around us shook and rustled as our big barge-like craft pushed through them slowly.

"All through this journey," I said, as I worked the oar quietly to and fro in the stern, "I have never really doubted what you said to me at the first. But I know now that we are not really travelling—together. I travel on the surface. You are moving onward on some deeper river, beyond my ken."

He nodded.

"I have travelled far since we met," he said, "and I know that I am not far now from the end of my journey, or its continuation in a new way."

"And what is the goal? What end are you nearing?"

"This surface life," he said, waving his

hand over the bent stalks of the papyrus which appeared above the moving gunwales of our boat, "is only the waste fringe of a greater. There are no regions such as this, mere aimless swamps of mud and water, in the universe as it proceeds from its real source, along its deepest and truest channels. We are not far now from the source of things, the point at which they emerge in their first reality, as from the pulse and mainspring of creation, full of action and meaning. I shall push my way on. I can see my way ahead. I have behind me the momentum of my life's wanderings, the resultant swing and direction of all my eager journeyings to and fro. The way continually opens up broader and clearer to my eyes, and I can *see* my way ahead. But with you it is different. You cannot see as I can, and you cannot follow me. You are right. *Together* it is impossible for us to journey much farther. But we have not yet reached the point at which we must part."

He paused here, thinking deeply, and I noticed that into his eyes had returned that strange half-baffled look which I had observed

before. I expected him to say more, but presently he returned again to his work. I knew that he had something in his mind to say; and I knew also that before long we must part. But I had grown so accustomed to relying upon him that this did not disquiet me. He would arrange the matter best, however it might turn out. I worked the boat onwards, out across a lagoon many miles in circumference. That distant sound-perception as of far-off thunder remained with me for some time. It had formed a kind of background to the vibrations of Lund's voice whilst he was speaking, just as the horizon and the fierce light which smote the plains of water ahead formed the background of his person as he sat in the bows. I never before felt so conscious of the great distance which separated us though we travelled in the same boat. I knew instinctively by some certain intuition which accorded exactly with his words to me, that we could not much longer be fellow-travellers, that somewhere and in some way we must part. But how?—and under what circumstances would this parting take place? How

could the journey have a different end for him and for me? The absolute severance between us which did shortly take place—so complete and irrevocable—was a thing which went beyond the power of my imagination. When it did take place, it happened so quietly and so easily, that it was impossible even then for me to realize it. I have since understood that Nature's greatest doings—for it was Nature which moved him, and her fully reasonable laws on which he relied—do take place so quietly that we are unable to appreciate and value them. Nature knows no miracles, and hence she knows nothing of those intensely human accompaniments of miracle—astonishment, dismay, soul-shattering emotions, and the disintegration of all previous experience. Nature works simply. I witnessed one of her most astonishing feats, and it happened quietly—so quietly that I am not able to reach those who appreciate events according to the excitement they are capable of producing. I shall not be believed in what I have to recount because it came so inevitably. It just happened, and it is too big for me to realize, or explain.

It was two days after our last talk, when we had penetrated about one hundred miles into this swamp district, that Lund definitely prepared me for his departure. He spoke to me somewhat as follows :

“ The experiences with which my consciousness has been in touch since leaving England, have been of a different nature to anything which I ever fully foresaw. It is now impossible for me to put things to you in a manner which would be profitable for either of us. The subject is too vast, and I have learned and unlearned too much since we set out together, for me to give you any account, either of my further road or of the present path leading me there, which would be of any value to yourself or others. Yet our original agreement holds good. I dimly see that that relation has some permanence . . . ” —he stopped for a moment, and frowned slightly, an expression of intense thought on his face—“ the relation between yourself and me has its place somewhere, I know, amongst things permanent. . . . ” Again he hesitated, as if grasping at some difficult thought. “ Amongst the changing, disappearing forms



of things," he said, "as they recede from my view in all their confused disorder and tangled difficulty, I can yet see our friendship as a thing that lasts. Now," he went on, "you remember what our original compact was ? "

"I was to interpret your life to the scientific world, to record and observe and explain."

"Hold fast to that," he said, and there was a thrill in his voice which entered my soul. "Understand what I mean," he went on. "You have plenty of faith in me. Your intuitional faculties are considerable, you are impressionable, and you easily developed a strong belief in my doings. But faith and belief are no use to me now. Your business is to *see* ! When the time comes, remember my words. You have no other relation to me. It is not for you to assist me, or further my journey, or, for that matter, retard it and impede it. Only you must *see*. You must concentrate your endeavour on that alone, and, if Heaven wills, you *will* see, and record ! "

I had never before seen Lund so much

moved on the surface. He seemed to be struggling with something, and I was reminded of the first talk I had with him, when he spoke of his relation to the world of science, and in his eyes I had seen that baffled look which was latent in them, and which now and then became visible on the surface. Afterwards I understood what he meant by "seeing," but at the time I could not quite enter into his meaning.

That evening Lund showed me the charts which he had sketched of the swamp region, up to the point which we had reached. A mist had arisen, and the light of Lund's electric lamp lit up dense clouds of moisture all round us, which blotted everything from view, and moistened the pages of the chart over which we pored. He pieced these pages together, and at the same time showed me the point at which they joined the printed official map of the Euphrates. He showed me, with the utmost care, the bearings of the different lines of direction which we had followed, since quitting the main stream of the Euphrates; and he made me go over again myself what he had told me, as to the

successive points which we had passed, until he had satisfied himself that I could retrace my course back to the main stream of the river. In all this I saw that he contemplated my having shortly to return—alone.

The mist which had arisen was disagreeable, and it grew worse as the night went on. I hardly dared to sleep. There was fever in the air, and the mist was hot and steamy, and smelled disagreeably. When I fell into a doze, I dreamed that dense trees were growing on the bank beside me, their bark slimy with ooze, and their branches thickly interlacing overhead and dripping with the steam of the fog. I woke again in terror, feeling as if Lund and I had together penetrated into the primeval state of the world, when volcanic heat and fog and rank vegetation covered the earth. I could not get rid of an obsession of the presence all round me of wet branches and fat roots more like the fingers of huge starfish and polypod than the vegetation of to-day. My clothes were saturated with moisture, and the smell of slime and ooze was intolerable. I shall never forget the sight of Lund's lamp shining on his

table, and of his head and shoulders looming up out of this hideous fog, as he worked away steadily and undaunted at his map, completing the sketches he had made by day. How he managed it, I do not know, as the fog was wet enough to reduce his paper to a pulp. I fell asleep again and awoke in the morning, only to find that this thick pall of mist had not removed, but was as bad as ever.

In spite of this, after we had got some breakfast, Lund told me to push off into the mist, and he directed the course which he wished me to take. For the first time since we started down the river, he had ceased his work on the map. The table was bare and the sheets had been put away. He sat in the bows, looking forward, and directed our course, telling me which way to steer. He did this without the aid of his compass, which he had been using up till then. He simply looked ahead, and called out to me now and then, whenever I went off the line of direction. "A little to the left," he would say, "now right—slightly right—still right—now left again," and so on at intervals, according as the boat left the direct line which was to be

pursued. I remembered what he had said to me once about his ability to travel "like the migrating bird, by instinct." As the day went on, the mist seemed to become thicker. Often I could scarcely see Lund at the other end of the boat, and I felt ill and suffocated with the thick vapour.

And then a thought came to me, which brought with it a sense of horror and of fear. What if this blank world from which all sight and form and distinctness had vanished, was destined to be *for me* the end of the journey? Lund's words to me recurred with a horrible doubt. "Your business," he had said, "is to *see*. When the time comes," he said, "remember my words. Your only duty to me is to *see*." There had been some deep meaning underlying his words, which I could not quite fathom at the time. Was it this experience that he had foreseen? Was this dreadful darkness of mist and nothingness the beginning of the end? I could not see. I could scarcely see Lund himself in the bows. I felt myself choking, hemmed in by this impenetrable fog. There was something uncanny and unnatural about it all. And

superstition laid violent hold upon my mind. The journey had not been natural from the first! There suddenly recurred with great distinctness to me the thought of those weird apparitions and visions of men standing by the Euphrates, those denizens of a lost world, and I thought too of the unnatural disturbances of the course of our boat, when she seemed to be pinched in the grasp of some invisible hand, thrust upwards from below. Had I passed, under the influence of this man, into a world of enchantment, and was I now in the clutches of a spell from which I was unable to shake myself free? *He* could see. He was guiding the boat onward with unerring precision. A cold sweat began to freeze my cheeks and forehead. We were going down into the under-stream then: we were being submerged, absorbed into it. It had begun to envelop us, to enwrap itself about us, and wind us round with its sickly folds of blank darkness. Was this mist *the unknowable*? Palpable and horribly real, and yet without form and void, mere emptiness and darkness. Lund's eyes were used to it. He was familiar with it, and through



the mist who knows what vision might have been shining before his inner eye, and beckoning him on. But I had no such spiritual vision. Yes—it was spiritual vision which he had meant, when he talked about *seeing*. I possessed no such vision. There was nothing but blankness before my outer eyes, and terror before the inner sight of my mind. And this then would be the end of the journey? He would penetrate onward, in touch as he always had been with this wondrous force, and I should be lost for ever in its dead, passionless, timeless nothingness. With a violent effort I dragged my mind away from these paralysing superstitions. Once more I thought of his words, “Concentrate all your endeavours on the effort to see—and, if Heaven wills, you *will* see, and record!” For some reason, in the midst of my terror and confusion of mind, I never appealed to Lund, or asked for his comfort and help. I knew that he had given me the best of his counsel, and that my business was, simply with all my mind, to obey and follow and to try to see.

Another night and day passed without the

mist lifting. I succeeded to some extent in quieting my dread of this awful fog, by sternly concentrating all my mind on Lund, and on my guiding oar and the directions he called out to me from the bows. But I was becoming physically ill, sick from the noxious fumes of this mist, which seemed to be blowing slowly by all the time from some fetid swamp in the neighbourhood. And on the third evening I lay down to sleep in the bottom of the boat, ill and almost delirious. Yet through it all remained the consciousness of Lund's words to me, "There is in the relation between you and me something permanent. . . . Amid the changing, disappearing forms of things, as they recede from my view, . . . there is something in our friendship that lasts." That was the golden thread of some unbreakable comfort to which I clung; and I know now that it was because I held on to that, and did not give way to the surging fears and superstitious terrors which came upon me during this last stage of our journey, that in the end I *did* see—something.

That last night of our voyage together—for

so it proved to be—I fell into an unhealthy sort of stupor, rather than sleep. The fog seemed thicker than ever, and the bank to which the boat was moored was wet and sticky. But just before I awoke the next morning, I began to dream, and to dream in a way I had never dreamed before. I was semi-conscious, and I knew that I was dreaming, but I lay still and dreamed on for the pure luxury of it. For I felt like a traveller on a night journey through Europe, who awakes at dawn as the train enters the Jura country, and the scent of hay is blown in from the mountain-sides into the stuffy, smoky railway-carriage. I smelt the fragrance of flowers, a sweet, healthy, dry smell, instead of the stink of the morass which had been with us for so long, and through my closed eyes—which I kept closed for fear of waking from the dream—there flashed every now and then the sight of primroses, banks and clusters of them, which appeared to be in motion, rustling up into sudden life, it seemed, from mossy ground beneath. Now and then the mist overhead would break, and a sweep of birds' wings, like thousands of

starlings startled from a thicket, would draw swiftly across the open space above me, and back again, as though blown hither and thither by a wind. For I thought that a gale of warm wind was blowing, and I opened my lungs to inhale its dry delicious fragrance. This wind seemed to be full of light, as though the wind and the light were one. If you can speak of light blowing along the wind and streaming in it, that was how it appeared to me; and the light was full of healthy beautiful crystal hues, some of which were quite new to me. A peculiar brown predominated in them, and also a certain dry dark colour of great purity, which it is impossible exactly to describe. But the more consciously I enjoyed this dream experience, the more did it fade, until at last I opened my eyes, and found to my intense disappointment that the mist was still hemming us in on all sides. Yet it felt lighter; and in my heart there was a strong ray of hope; for the atmosphere and memory of the dream remained with me. Though it was only a dream, I felt that something lay behind it. It was the beginning of something

real. If only I had been able to see more through those melting mists, and understand what was happening behind them. There was meaning in the wind, and in that flurry of birds, tossed as it seemed into the air by some kind of disturbance below, and in those rustling moving flowers, and in the light which streamed through it all. Whatever it meant, I myself felt refreshed by it and well, and the noisome sort of sickness which had possessed me the day before, had entirely vanished. Lund too looked fresh and happy. Rather to my surprise I saw that he was dressed differently from usual, that is to say, he had his pack or rucksack on his back, and his strong nailed boots instead of the shoes he wore on board. He looked prepared for an excursion on foot. He told me to push off as usual, and once more we were making our way through the mist, and along the dark edge of the water which skirted the endless beds of white papyrus. Certainly the mist was lighter and more dry, and as I thought of my dream, I felt hopeful and even joyful with the hope. I kept thinking of those words of Lund which he had spoken to me

some time before. "We shall reach," he said, "the beginning of things, so far as the earth is concerned—the point at which creation streams out from the infinite." Were we possibly even now not far from that beginning? The thought was staggering. Yet there was something about that happy trouble of birds and flowers, of which I had been aware in my dream, stirring behind the veil of mist, which both gave me an entirely new sensation, new in every sense of the word, and at the same time seemed to have something recognizable about it. Could it be a first faint glimpse or reminder or memory of "the beginning of things" so far as this earth was concerned? My mind began to grasp at this marvellous hope, and then suddenly I noticed that the fog was clearing. It was thinner ahead, and the skeins of mist were visible, rolling themselves back and out of our path. I worked violently at the oar, speeding up the heavy boat to the utmost, and to my joy I saw the clouds lifting and stealing away in all directions. Presently we were out of it altogether and had emerged into the open. We were on a broad stretch



of blue water, reaching in places almost as far as the eye could see.

The relief of breaking away from that mist and seeing the world again in all its brilliancy of colour and space was glorious. I laughed aloud with pleasure. And now I called out to Lund a thing which had been in my mind for some time.

“Was that the mist,” I said, “which went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground, mentioned in Genesis?”

Lund smiled.

“Do you believe those old Hebrew legends?” he said.

“Not literally,” I answered.

“But it’s natural enough that heavy mists should hang about these swamp regions,” he said.

“Certainly. But what has it to do with the book of Genesis?”

“Only that this region may have been what the Hebrew seer had in mind in writing his allegory. The Hebrews were a very metaphorical people; they used symbols and signs to express their meaning, and Oriental imagery of all sorts. Doubtless the writer

meant far more by that mist than meets the eye. It was in the spirit of the times and the style of his literature that he should do so. And this is the very land to which those traditions belong. So far as we know, he lived in Chaldæa, or at any rate was familiar with Chaldæan culture."

"That mist had something very suggestive about it," I said. "It seemed like the end of all things, a formless void: it suggested to me the time when the earth according to geologists was a mere mass of volcanic mud and slime and steam. That was how it felt to me, but I suppose it was only my imagination."

"Yes, only your imagination," said Lund, "but it corresponded with the mental struggles you are making to reach the true beginning and origin of things—that ultimate force with which in some degree we move, and which itself moves all things. There is nothing fabulous about that force itself. It is glorious energy, life, creation—the stream or fountain from which well forth the forms of beauty which even the things we see here remind us of; even birds and flowers, the wind and the

light—all natural things—speak of this primal energy and movement.”

These words to me were startlingly clear. They explained those superstitious terrors which had come upon me, and they confirmed me in the hope I had faintly conceived about the vision I had seen in my dream. I was about to speak of it to Lund, when I heard his voice again. It had altered. It sounded low, and far off.

“Row on now,” he said, “row on to the shore.”

I looked ahead and saw that the far end of the open lagoon into which we had emerged was fringed by distant trees, and I dipped the oar again and worked it from the stern. The trees were visible here and there rising in banks above the level of the water, showing that the land on which they grew was terra firma, rising occasionally into low hills. Hitherto I had seen no trees, during our slow progress through the marshes, nor anything in the least resembling a hill; the whole region was too watery and the ground too muddy for anything but the papyrus and various kinds of water-jungle to grow. As

we drew nearer, and the coastline opened up more clearly and unfolded itself, I was greatly impressed by the magnificence of the trees, which were marshalled in imposing lines on the shore, or grouped in splendid masses of dark foliage on the higher ground. I cannot put a name to the different species of tree which these great silent groves represented. Many of them resembled the coniferous kind, with grand feathery boughs of dark green tasselled foliage, harbouring masses of shade, and in their silence eloquent of some massive strength mightier even than our own oak and elm. Others I fancy were rosewood and teak, and I saw many splendid smooth rounded trunks as straight as columns which reminded me of our limes, beeches, and plane-trees. But to none of them could I put a definite name. Only they were the finest trees I have ever seen. The trunks towered up out of the brown soil, which was comparatively free from undergrowth, and above were the thick sunny roofs of leaves, turned golden and light green by the strong light. It was a world of trees, and one felt this the more because each tree by itself seemed to

possess an individuality. This was due, I think, to the perfection of their form. I have never seen trees in which the form was so symmetrical, or the groups and branching masses of foliage more superbly proportioned.

On this solid land, so welcome after the shapeless marshes, we alighted from the boat. There was on the face of my companion an expression in harmony with the beauty of this land of spacious trees. His head was thrown back, and there was a look of exaltation and of relief and happiness on his brow. He had left the boat before me. In fact he was on the shore standing amongst the trees before I was aware that he had left me. I had turned to work the oar with some force in order to bring the nose of our heavy craft round, and lay her alongside the bank. I did not hear him jump from the boat, nor scramble up the bank, but there he stood amongst the trees when I glanced up, with his stick in his hand, and his traveller's rucksack slung over his back, and I noticed the look of exaltation and peace on his face, which I have mentioned. He gave me one glance, and then walked off into the wood.

I had no idea whither he was going, but I hastily made the boat fast and ran after him. It seemed to me curious that he should have worn his coat and his pack on his back, and a heavy pair of boots and his puttees—all of which things it would have been natural to leave behind for a stroll in the woods. I ran after him, simply in my shirt-sleeves, and a pair of light shoes which I drew on over my bare feet. I had no time to put on anything else. He moved so quickly ; and lightly clad as I was, I had great difficulty in keeping up with him. In fact, I never did overtake him. He was gone at the last moment, I think, before I had reached him. Nor did I question him as to where he was going, or what he was doing. The purpose and energy with which his whole being was instinct, whatever its nature, was so obvious and paramount—it was written all over him—that it spoke to me of itself, and silenced all questions. He passed along with quick steps rather ahead of me. Sometimes I almost lost sight of him, and then I saw him, passing rapidly along amidst the trunks of the trees, his grey head thrown back, his stick swinging, his coat



unbuttoned and fluttering sometimes in the breeze. This struck me as strange, because there was no wind near me, but it looked to me as if he were moving in a wind. His figure expressed the most splendid energy and freedom.

So we walked on, one behind the other. In spite of my exertions to keep up with him, I did not lose my sense of the grandeur and beauty of the woods through which we were passing. The lofty height and massive size of the dark boughs overhead seemed to uplift one, and affected me like music. The thought came to me, as we passed onward, that Lund's search for some spot on the earth's surface, nearer than any other to that hidden goal to which all his journeys had pointed, was nearing fulfilment. There was an expressiveness about those trees, such as I have never known in Nature before. They had an utterance higher than anything human, and that is why they appealed to me like music. They seemed to speak some *tongue*, the most solemn and dignified language ever voiced by sensible forms, and I knew that they were the threshold and vestibule of a mystery. I had

real proof, satisfactory to my senses, that that wonderful old river, down which we had travelled, the cradle and the nurse of civilization, corresponded in some outward way to the stream and motion of a natural force which welled up from the ultimate heart of things. Lund had spoken of himself as "following a trail," recognizing and tracing back certain landmarks indicative of the passage of this ultimate power, which swayed the operations of Nature. What if the last of these earth-landmarks was this country of trees, recognized by the old seer or prophet as the beginning of things? That is why the thought came to me that in sober truth this might be that Garden of Eden which time and time alone had transformed into myth and fable in men's minds.

As I was thinking these thoughts, we had passed some way into the country of trees, and we had struck a small valley with a stream flowing down it. Some way ahead now I saw my companion disappear over higher ground at the head of the valley. I was getting left behind more and more. When I reached the top of this slope, rather breathless

and dripping with perspiration, I saw that this valley broadened out and that there was an opening in the trees. Lund was now a long way ahead of me, and moving so fast that I thought he must be running. This opening of the valley was a very beautiful spot. It had a cup-like appearance, surrounded by low hillocks on which were massed vivid dark green date-palms, and in the centre stood a giant pine-tree. Its shadow was of great length, as the early sun was only just peeping over the palm groves on the edge of the valley, and the shadow stood out very black on its grassy rough mounds of turf round the stream beside which it stood. It was the kind known as the umbrella pine, and the shadow of its foliage lay at a considerable distance from the foot of the tree. Into this patch of shade I saw Lund walk, stand erect for an instant, and then bend down on his knees, examining the ground. I strolled onward more slowly. As I went, I admired the form and distinctness of the spot, which was like a shallow crater with the grand pine-tree in the centre. I thought Lund was examining some rare

flower or insect in the ground, and I stopped on the edge of this pool of shade, fanning myself. And then I was suddenly aware of a marvel. For it was no butterfly or rare plant that Lund was examining, but a ray of light which appeared to be emitted from the grass. I glanced hastily up into the top of the pine to see if it could be a stray sunbeam. But it was nothing of the kind. The shadow was thick, and impenetrable, and the sunshine all evenly diffused. It was a beam of light, standing above the grass, in the midst of the patch of shadow, straight as a rod, like the tunnel of light which streams through a hole in the shutter of a darkened room. And Lund was examining it, just as one examines a plant. And I too went up closer to it, and fixed my eyes upon it. It was full of beautiful hues, yet as a whole it was a white light, very pure, and not intense, but shining most clearly in and through the diffused light of day. I remained motionless watching it. Certainly it appeared to be shining out of the ground. But as I looked at it, I became aware that a change was coming over my own vision. The new light

began to absorb my view. The patch of shadow round it had receded. I saw this shadow, and Lund's own body, as he watched it, as a mere surface thing, without real substance, like the reflection on the top of a pool, so strong was the attractive power of this light, which more and more monopolized my sight. My gaze seemed to be travelling downwards, and to broaden in scope as the focus changed. I looked down into the depths of some transparent rich brown atmosphere, which was full of a peculiar arrowy light, such as I had seen in my dream that morning, brilliant as jewels, in spite of its sober chaste colouring. In this atmosphere a wind was blowing, laden with a delicious earthy scent, and I was aware of some stir going on, just beyond the reach of my vision, which was not yet used to the new light. At the same time there reached my ears the most exquisite sound that I have ever heard. It was as soft as a thick fall of feathery snowflakes, and presently I saw that it was caused by the fall of myriads of flowers, which were welling up and falling over in a great mass, or a wheel-like fountain, inside the column of

light, which continually broadened. The busy way in which they rose and fell reminded me again of the mill-wheel of my childhood's days. The flowers were not in the earth, nor were they cut from the stalk; they were surging up complete, infinite in abundance and quantity, from deep, dry, glorious depths of brown earth—or a substance of some kind. This substance caused in some way the peculiar crystal clear brown hues in the light. This fall of flowers was the softest and mightiest thing I have ever seen, and the most fragrant, healthy and sweet. After that I saw many things in this wonderful spring. I saw the primroses I had dreamed of shouldering their way up in rustling masses. Now it was bushes of myrtle I saw, with their innumerable little pointed leaves, which opened out suddenly with a rushing sound like the flutter of a fan; or myriads of birds swept through the light, like slanting veils drawn across the sky. The fitful manner in which these things kept appearing in the light, which had now broadened all about me, suggested the way a wind blows upon the water of a fountain, scattering its spray at the point



where the stream leaps its highest and falls again. As I watched this fountain of life, seeing many things in it, which it is impossible to describe—words in fact can only suggest in the vaguest way what I really saw—I did not altogether lose consciousness of my normal surface surroundings. I saw the little crater-like valley round me, with the tall pine in the centre, and the wild straggling grasses and the surrounding hillocks, but all this surface landscape seemed now to be throbbing with life, trembling with some pent-up energy; and I thought once more of the shaking wooden stairs and quaking floors of the old mill. That was my experience in the outer casing of my consciousness—which now seemed to me no more than an unreal superficial mirage. Deeper down, my view of the inner world, into which my sight had penetrated, was broadening. I now saw great groves of trees start momentarily into sight, with their huge trunks and branches tossing in the glorious wind. Everything seemed to be blown into view and out again by this wind, which blustered grandly, and which gave me

a sense of some force of infinite spaciousness, like the sea, which had for an instant got pent in a cavern and become tempestuous. And then my heart stood still. There leapt into view a forest of Roman oaks, and in the midst of them I saw Lund standing erect with both his arms outstretched. The next instant the sight was blotted from view by the delicious gurgle and rush of the wind and light. It seemed impossible that he should live in such a tempest of movement, but the next instant a mass of shaking palm-trees swept into sight, and again I saw Lund clinging to them, exactly as a swimmer struggles in a surf that is wellnigh beyond his control. And I began to realize that this tornado of life was coming in waves, that a sea of creation was literally breaking itself somewhere close at hand, and spouting in spray, like the waves in a cavern. The next instant the whole atmosphere was a mass of white sea-birds, a surge of wings, flung into the air, which threatened to smother everything, and again I saw Lund, still erect and striving forward. I understood then that he was struggling to get out of this beautiful mael-

strom, as it blustered round its prison, like the wind pent in a gleaming chimney high up in the rocks. Now and then I could see his face. The expression on it was not one of fear or agony, but of masterful hope and joy. Next instant it seemed as if half a hill-side reared itself up, with trees and shaking bushes violently agitated on its crest. It broke in a deluge of flying leaves, like the autumn of a whole forest, only the leaves were brilliantly green, sunny and alive; and in the midst of them I saw Lund again, still erect, and holding his own against the flood. He was fighting his way forward through this surge of creative force, and seemed to be gaining the mastery over these marvellous stormy waves. There came a sudden rush of deep red earth, and torn broken edges of moss and fern, and following it immediately a sweep of sliding pine-trees, which gushed by erect with the wind, and singing in their heaven-swept tops, and after that for a moment I looked beyond the breakers, and saw that there was a way out. For one instant I had a glimpse of the sea—such a sea as I never beheld before, and have never

seen again—solid as marble, and burning a far deeper purple-green than it is possible for our senses to imagine. Just opposite this rift, through which I looked, and which for all the world was like the entrance of a cavern, I saw an island, the cliffs of which were glowing in the noonday light, red and warm like the sun itself, and all round it lay the flat, dark, marble floor of ocean, and a joyous sound reached my ears of some gigantic infinite existence. In the midst of all this I saw Lund's figure, dressed just as he had been in life, with his sack on his shoulders. He had got just beyond the entrance of the cave, and was walking forward across this solid sea towards the glowing red island cliffs, with the blue of the deepest imaginable sky around him, and as he passed onward, walking over the sea, I knew that I should not see him again. For even as I looked, I saw the immovable green circle of the little valley where I stood glimmering into view more distinctly; and the golden ruddy light of the morning sun on the trunk of the pine-tree began to assert itself once more before my eyes. Shadowy and frail as

this sight appeared in comparison with the glowing inward vision which I had just seen, it yet grew in definiteness to the exclusion of the inner vision, until I found myself kneeling in the shade of the pine alone. The rod of light had vanished. The surface consciousness had completely reasserted itself. It was only through my sympathy with Lund that my own vision had become more penetrating, and when he passed quite beyond me, I lost sight of his environment. There was nothing round me now but the grass and the silent pine, and the low hillocks round the valley, inscrutable and empty as usual, looking to my eyes pale in colour and faded, the mere crust and appearance of life, void of its inner splendour and warmth. On that surface I have lived till now, and on it I fear that I shall die. For Lund was a traveller far beyond the apprehension of the world. In his short life he must have travelled beneath the surface as far as it will take the rest of us whole cycles of existence and many lives and deaths to accomplish. This was the reason why he was so misunderstood by the world. The intense activity and swift move-

ment of his deeper life were not apparent outwardly, but they were not without their effect. These effects were misinterpreted. To critical men with carefully trained intellects his statements seemed marked by exaggeration and excessive emphasis, or by egotism and sheer invention. His accomplishments were greater than he was able to explain or convince the scientific world of. This will probably always be the case where deeds are much greater than words. Where he failed to produce a true impression on the minds of his generation, I doubtless also shall fail, but I shall never cease to testify to what I saw of his disappearance in the Lemlun district, and to endeavour to elucidate it to my own consciousness, and to find the scientific law which lies behind it.

At the moment when it occurred, Lund's disappearance satisfied my reason. I saw dimly what it meant. It was several years before, that he first touched the main stream of that universal force which moved him. He was first fully aware of it, he had told me, when crossing the lakes which he discovered in the deserts of Central Asia. I



think that the rest of his life after that represented the struggle of the outer man to free itself from contact with surface forces, and penetrate completely into the main under-stream. If any one thinks that it was Lund's soul which passed on, whilst his body remained on the surface, he has not grasped at all the significance of the explorer's achievement. Nothing of him remained behind. The whole man penetrated onwards. As I walked back to the boat, thinking this extraordinary event over in my mind, it occurred to me that the appearance of broken waves of creative force, producing momentary sprays of existence in the fitful appearance of trees, flowers, birds, and other forms of earth, through which he pushed his way outwards, was only the manner in which my own subjective consciousness, and possibly his own, envisaged the real event. He was breaking loose from his earth surroundings, and at the same time it seemed as if the stream and ultimate force of Nature was itself breaking in a confused way on the shore of earth, at the point where he embarked. But in reality such faint experience as I myself

had had previously of that stream, and have since felt, leads me to think that actually it flows on evenly and undisturbed in all its parts, and that the appearance of turbulent waves and a confused tempest of creation was simply due subjectively to the breaking up of the surface consciousness, through which the whole man shook himself free from the earth, and won out into a saner and truer existence. Lund's journey was a real one, and he pushed his way on into one of the main arteries of the world's life, which only differs from this surface life in that it is more real, active, and vigorous. If his body had any meaning whilst he was still travelling on earth, it had still more meaning when he reached the elements and forces of the world in their purer condition. Not a trace of him was left behind. He always travelled very light, and in this last journey he wittled down his necessities simply to what he could stand up in. When I got back to the boat, I could find no effects of his—nothing but that colossal work, his map of the Euphrates.

I remained for two whole days thinking these things over amidst those grand trees,

through which I roamed in all directions. I believe that I have never at any time in my life thought in such a sustained manner or so much to the purpose, as I did during those days in the forest. Yet it will scarcely be believed that at the end of this time, I retraced my steps to the valley and the pine, and carried out a systematic search for Lund's body in the neighbourhood. This had nothing to do with my own judgment, but before leaving, my thoughts returned to the world I had left behind, and various imperative considerations began to besiege my mind. I should be disbelieved, and every manner of question would be asked me, and the beginning and end of these questions I knew would shape itself in this way—Did you search the neighbourhood thoroughly? So I searched the neighbourhood, not thoroughly, but in a perfunctory manner, knowing as I did that such a search was absurd and that it must inevitably be fruitless. Still I searched, and I even called, and called again his name, and fired the shot-gun which we had in the boat, to no purpose, but to satisfy the judgment of the world, before whose bar I already felt

myself standing. I know that it was latent fear of that judgment which influenced me, and I believe now that it would have been better for me and for the world too, if I had gone straight back, without looking once behind me, firm in my certainty of what had happened, and searched only my own heart, in order to grapple at once with those lurking fears of men's opinion which harboured there. As it was, that search for the explorer's body was the beginning of some very humiliating experiences which followed — humiliating in their revelation of my own weakness, and my unfaithfulness even to the deepest and most certain convictions of my inmost being.

After carrying out this search, I returned to the boat and set out again through the marshes and lagoons, making once more for the main stream of the Euphrates. I encountered no more mist. That seemed to have cleared off completely for the time. With the aid of Lund's map, I easily identified certain recognizable landmarks, and following these I made my way surely back through the blue waters and white papyrus-grasses to the

main stream. I was first aware that I had reached the river by the sight of a small paddle-steamer, ploughing its way up-stream. It was one of Strickland's which ply between the Persian Gulf, Kurna, and up as far as Hillah. Seeing it I felt once more in civilization. On the fore-deck I saw one or two well-dressed figures, evidently tourists, a lady and two male figures in white. I guessed they were Americans, and then I began to wonder what hotel I should go to when I reached Basra. Another day's journey brought me to Kurna—another place like Hillah, which has a thriving trade with the coast. I landed here in order to buy more provisions. I had intended to go straight on to Basra, as I did not wish to show my passports and submit to any cross-examination, but passing Kurna, the little town at the junction of the Tigris, as the sun was rising, and seeing few people about, I simply landed and walked up into the town unquestioned; and later on, finding the comforts of civilization agreeable after so long in the boat, I spent the night in a small khan or inn there. As I sat out on the veranda that

night, smoking and drinking coffee, after a conversation with a Jewish agent, buying shawls and rugs, suddenly the full weight of the responsibility resting on my shoulders loomed into sight before my mental vision, and it terrified me. What was it that had happened out there in the marshes? How could I tell such a story to the world? How should I bring it home to any one? I looked at the little Jew opposite me, who was wearing a fez to show his familiarity with the Orient, though he was a Londoner by birth. He was a particularly cocksure, wide-awake specimen of his tribe, and it was only his absorption in his cigar and coffee and liqueur, each of which he was thoughtfully tasting and sampling in turn, which had momentarily reduced him to silence, and allowed my thoughts to wander back to that tall pine-tree and the events which had taken place under its shade. What was it that I had to prove to the world? How should I explain it? My brain suddenly swam. I had to grasp my chair firmly, and in order to recover myself, I stirred my coffee violently, called for a cigar and a liqueur, and began to



discuss their respective merits with my companion.

After that I became the victim of such nervous fears as I hope I shall never again suffer. The worst of these doubts was the fear for my own sanity. Had both Lund and I become the victim of delusions, born of the fog and the loneliness of those regions? Had he perhaps gone off his head, and rushed away to lose himself in the swamps, as I had heard of people doing on lonely expeditions? Had I through the infectiousness of insanity and suggestion, especially in such solitude, been temporarily out of my mind? These awful doubts I dismissed as soon as they occurred to me, because I knew they were unreal. Yet they were sufficient to make me nervous. There came upon me a kind of dread of the experience I had undergone; so that whenever my thoughts turned in that direction, they became agitated and confused; consequently this dread was temporarily my master. It was so strong that I dared not for the time face the thought of Lund's disappearance. I was afraid in fact that if I thought about it too much, I *should* go off my head.

In this state of mind, I continued my way down-stream, until the broad flood of the river widened out seaward, and I landed at last for good, and had myself and my things transported to Basra, where letters were to await us.

I went to the Hotel des Palmes, and arranged to have my letters and Lund's brought over from the house of the British consul, where they had been addressed. I soon found that my arrival caused extreme interest in the hotel. I was surprised at this, as Basra is visited by quite a number of tourists and commercial people. It was explained, however, by the manager, who brought me some newspapers in my room.

"You have seen ze papers?" he said, with a fat deferential smile, but something of a twinkle in his eye.

"Not for nearly three weeks," I said.

He shrugged his shoulders and smiled again.

"Much conversations about your shourneys," he said, fixing the glasses on his brown hooked nose, and looking up at me from under his Turkish fez.

“What conversations ? ”

“Questions in the Reichstag and in your Houses of Parliament—nise clever man, Grey,” he said, thoughtfully smoothing out the paper on the table in front of him.

He proceeded at my request to translate certain passages in the Turkish paper. As he was doing so, the British consul, Burford, arrived, and greeted me very warmly.

“Your journey has attracted a great deal of notice,” he said. “I have been deluged with correspondence. They want to know who employed Lund. Sir Edward Grey has been questioned in the House of Commons. The German Government disclaims all knowledge of you. I receive fresh inquiries by every post ! ”

He smiled at me in a humorous way, and there was something about his thoroughly English manner, and the common ground of education and upbringing, which I saw at a glance existed between us, which comforted me. And yet it was just that bond of sympathy and mutual understanding, as it affected the amenities of life, which tempted me to play traitor to my deepest inner con-

victions, and which produced the following conversation between us.

I had hesitated after his greeting, and I now looked at him very gravely. His face became serious at once. I looked at the manager also, who, in his greasy frock-coat and carpet slippers, was listening to us with great curiosity and enjoyment, and motioned him out of the room.

Then I turned again to Burford.

"I have a difficult piece of news to give you," I said. "Lund is lost—he has disappeared."

His face went a shade paler, as he looked at mine.

"Where?"

"In the Lemlun marshes."

"Drowned?"

"I don't know. Lost. He left the boat—and I never saw him again."

"You searched for him?"

"Yes."

"For how long did you search?"

"For some days—till my provisions got low."

"You think he was drowned?"

“ I don’t know.”

Burford turned upon me suddenly a sharp inquiring look, and I heard myself repeating, as though it were another person speaking, “ I don’t know. He may have been drowned—or else he lost his memory in the woods, and wandered away.”

“ Was there anything to make you think that ? ” went on Burford. “ Was he quite normal when you last saw him ? ”

“ Fin Lund was a very extraordinary man,” I said, “ a most unusual character.”

“ A strain of something abnormal ? ”

I hesitated, and I knew as I did so that my hesitation was completely misunderstood by my questioner.

“ He was quite himself,” I said in a low tone, “ quite himself up to the last.”

Burford was silent for a moment thinking.

“ It is rather a characteristic end for him,” he said. “ I feel most sincerely sorry for you. I am certain that no responsibility whatever is attaching to you. Something of this kind might easily have happened to Lund before. He had a lot of luck in his travels, and he seems to have formed a habit

of trusting to his luck. I understand that you two were entirely alone—that was rather risky, wasn't it? You won't mind my saying so, but I think there was something extravagant about his character. I could never believe half of what he wrote."

At this, I flared up. I defended my friend's character with passion. I repudiated eloquently and feelingly the false ideas current about him. And Burford looked at me admiringly.

"I like you for your enthusiasm about your friend," he said quietly. "He must have been a fine fellow. It was wrong of me to say anything against him."

Perhaps it was because I had been through so much the past weeks, and lived at a high tension, that at this moment tears began to run down my cheeks, which I was unable to choke back—tears of shame, remorse, self-hatred, and deep disgust at this initial faithlessness to my mission. Burford thought they were tears for my friend, and he was very kind to me, and cross-questioned and examined me as little as possible. Only he



insisted on another search-party visiting the spot where Lund had disappeared. This was the most humiliating experience of my life. I would gladly pass it over altogether in this narrative, but one incident needs to be recorded.

We reached the tree country quickly in a motor-launch chartered by Burford, but the district looked changed, and it was some days before I could find the spot where I had encamped on the shore. As I wandered about those woods fruitlessly, their beauty shot through my soul with a terrible rebuke. We found at last the open valley, where I had last seen Lund. I saw it again with a feeling as if something hard were bruising my heart, and contracting it, and when I got closer to the pine-tree in the centre, I saw an astonishing sight, although I believe in this tropical climate it happens frequently. Patches of red orchids were growing here and there about the bark of the pine, of a peculiarly sickly poisonous kind, which destroyed the healthy look of that tall straight tree, which had seemed to my eyes previously like the Tree of Life, which grew in the centre

of the Garden of Eden. The sight of this parasitic growth, the red flowers of which were shaped rather like cuttlefish, and spotted with black, appalled me. The tree looked to me now much more like the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which had harboured the enemy of mankind. As we went back at last to the motor-launch, by means of which we had accomplished the journey, that old allegory kept recurring to my mind. Surely the real enemy was *fear*, especially fear of the world, which was making a traitor of me. I was ill and deeply depressed during that search, confused in mind and scarcely in possession of myself. They thought it was the loss of my friend, but it was the loss of truth and beauty which caused me those pangs.

After this Burford sent me back to England. He told me not to worry about the international difficulties which had arisen over our journey. He said that was always the way with any question connected with the Bagdad railway. The whole business, he said, was a mass of diplomatic intrigue. The

difficulty was to find out who exactly was responsible for the engagement of Fin Lund, and what lay behind the Persian and Levant International Transport Company, the German Government having repudiated any connexion with it. Burford told me to report myself to the Foreign Office in London, and deposit with them Lund's map, which he said they would be very glad to have.

During my return journey to England, I had time to think over the whole situation. Bitterly disappointed as I was with myself, and with the false impression I had given of Lund's death, I had begun to realize that it would have been no use to tell Burford the truth. I could not then have found the words, and although the remembrance of that time is one of the bitterest of my experiences, when Judas-like I seemed with every word to be betraying my master, yet I began to think that it was the only line I could have taken at the time. I could not have found the means of convincing him then. With the passage of years, and as my mind has gradually more and more lost its belief in prevalent physical views of Nature, as they

were commonly expounded by men of science, I have gained a matured and unshakable belief in the facts I have recorded here. I see more deeply into their meaning. I realize more and more how Lund's words from the first, and his explanations during the journey, corroborated the facts of the journey; and I am searching about with some success for better means of interpreting and entering into those facts; and some day perhaps I shall fulfil the stewardship committed to me by the explorer better than I have hitherto done.

During that voyage home to England, I began to try to put down on paper an account of the facts, and some explanation of them, and it was when I began to do this that I felt the immense difficulty of the task before me. One thing I was determined about, and that was, to have the courage of my convictions, not at any rate to be deterred by mere cowardice, and accordingly I made up my mind that as soon as I got to England, I would tell certain of my friends, and learn from the experience how to face the world, and how far to be brave, or discreet.

With this determination in my mind, I found myself, a few weeks later, once more before the well-known Corinthian front of the London University, and I walked up the steps to visit my former chief, Dr. Strachan Smith. I found him in his den, amongst the dusty archæological remains, and as usual on the point of running away from it to his house in the suburbs. He greeted me with his usual nervous warmth, blinking at me through his spectacles.

"A great deal has passed over your head, Horton, since we last met," he said, smiling kindly.

"I have had the most wonderful experience of my life," I said.

"You must come up to Frognal, and tell us all about it," he said. "I want you to come round now with me to the Vice-Chancellor's room. He has received some inquiries about you from the Foreign Office. They do not understand how it was that you were chosen to accompany Lund on this survey. Every one has been talking about it."

"The reason why Lund chose me to go with him," I said, "was because there was

between us a very deep affinity. I want to tell you about it," and I took one of the museum chairs, and sat down firmly on it.

The professor nervously fingered his dispatch-case, out of which a mass of lecture notes were protruding.

"What kind of an affinity?" he said. "I should have thought you and he had nothing in common. The whole thing has been a mystery. The Senate discussed it yesterday. I could give no account of how you and Lund came to be fellow-travellers."

"And I want to give you an account of it now," I said, looking up at him firmly. "The whole thing is a deep mystery, as you say. If I can make it clear to you, we can then together lay the matter before the Senate and the Vice-Chancellor, and I hope the true facts of the case will reach Sir Edward Grey. But I want your assistance. You know me and have always been kind to me. I want you to hear me out, to credit what I say, and afterwards to stand by me, as a witness to my character, and truthfulness, and to my sanity——"



"My dear Horton!" murmured the professor.

"Yes, to my sanity," I went on. "For I have something of importance to say—something of importance to the whole world!"

That electrical look which I knew so well in the professor's hair and beard was now strongly in evidence. His fingers writhed behind his back, as they did when he was lecturing.

"You look very tired, Horton," he said. "I don't think you should have undertaken this journey without consulting a doctor. You were overworked at the end of last term, before you started."

I paid no attention to this. The recollection of my shame and remorse when I had previously concealed the truth, spurred me on. I was determined to have it out now.

"You heard of Lund's end—his disappearance in the Lemlun marshes?" I said.

"Don't let us talk of it now," he answered. "It has been a terrible experience to you. You have felt it deeply. You must take a holiday, have a good rest, and then get back to your normal work."

“ I want to talk about it now. What did you hear of his end ? ”

“ Only what we read in the newspapers.”

“ The newspapers did not give the facts. He was not lost really. I was standing by his side when he passed onward,” and I rose to my feet as I said it. “ Professor, we reached the Garden of Eden ! That Hebrew legend is true ! We saw the Tree of Life—he and I together—and from the ground a ray of light was shining. Down that ray Lund’s whole being, body and soul, passed. I saw him for a few instants struggling in the stream of creation, where it breaks and buffets on the crust of this old earth, and I saw him win his way through it, and out into the world of God ! ” And as I uttered these words there came welling up from within me a laugh of joy—joy at the truth, and at having broken down the barriers of my own terror and reserve, and partly too at the comical sight which the professor presented. For his hair and beard were now positively standing on end. He opened his mouth once or twice to speak, and then he pulled out his mass of lecture notes, and began

turning the pages rapidly over, in order to calm himself. At last he spoke with an assumed carelessness.

"We won't talk any more about it now, dear Horton," he said, "and I don't think there is any need for you to see the Vice-Chancellor just now, unless you would like to. You are tired and need a rest. Where are you staying? Back in your old digs? I wish you would come and spend the night with my wife and me up at Frognal—we are quite alone——"

I had never realized before what a really kind-hearted man Strachan Smith was, as he certainly thought me mad, but after this outburst of mine (which I think was really spoken in order to acquit myself in my own mind of cowardice), I quickly determined to change my tack, and to wait and watch for better opportunities of telling my tale to more receptive minds.

"Thanks very much," I said, "but I think I will see the Vice-Chancellor now; and you may rely on it that I shall not say anything about what I have just told you. I begin to realize now that it will need years

of patient quiet work before I get the facts of this case established."

"Yes, I think it would be a good thing to wait, before saying anything to the Vice-Chancellor," he said; and so I waited.

I have waited ten years, and my sanity is well proved, for I have continued to earn my living, and to support myself in the educational world, and here and there I have found a few people—always women—who have believed my story, and I now give the facts to the world just as they happened, although I still fail to reach the exact scientific law which I know lies behind the phenomena, and by means of which Lund hoped that his life-work might be explained, and rendered credible and intelligible to the scientific world. The world still believes that he lost his life in the swamps. But it is not the truth of the matter. As he said himself, he simply—travelled on.



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